

Justice for Edward Knight

OVERVIEW:

Edward Knight was convicted of a crime for which no DNA evidence exists tying him to the crime. He's been in prison for more than 20 years.

TAKE ACTION:

Help secure an independent review and new trial for Edward Knight, whose case lacks evidence of the crime for which he was convicted. Write the Suffolk County District Attorney.

BACKGROUND:

In 1998, Edward Knight was convicted of a killing and robbery that took place in Boston in 1996. Mr. Knight's co-defendant provided the chief evidence against him in testimony she provided to law enforcement under a plea agreement. There were no fingerprints, forensics, or anything else suggesting Knight killed the victim, or had ever been inside the victim's apartment, except the co-defendant's testimony. Further, the co-defendant said she never came into contact with the victim, and that she was in another room during the assault.

The victim's body was found on a Saturday afternoon. That same day, nearly 10 people, including the victim's brother, told the police they saw the victim alive on that Friday. Mr. Knight and the co-defendant were originally indicted for killing the victim on that Friday. However, after Mr. Knight and the co-defendant presented undisputed evidence that they left Massachusetts on Thursday, and thus had a concrete alibi for Friday, the co-defendant entered into a plea agreement. She agreed to testify that Mr. Knight killed the victim on Wednesday, before they left town.

At trial, six people told the jury - as they told police - that they spoke with or saw the victim alive after the co-defendant said he'd been killed.

The prosecutor attached to the case has heavily opposed a new trial for Mr. Knight, regardless of the evidence uncovered of his innocence, and opposed the presentation of scientific evidence that proves it would have been impossible for Mr. Knight to commit this crime.

Motion for New Trial

In 2009, 11 years after conviction, Innocence Network partners found a police report that had never been disclosed after a public records request. The report describes a woman, standing feet away from the victim's front door, threatening to kill him over an unpaid debt. In 2015, Innocence Network partners found female DNA among the victim's fingernail clippings. Mr. Knight's DNA was not found on more than 30 items lawyers have tested.

The investigation also found a childhood friend of the co-defendant, who said she called him from jail in 1997 while she was held on this case, saying she was innocent, was scared of going to prison, and was thinking about lying and blaming Mr. Knight.

The victim's time of death also remains a cause for speculation. Dr. Gerald Feigin, the medical examiner, testified at trial that the victim could have died anytime within 72 hours before his body was found, which supported the co-defendant's timeline. Further, his discussions of the victim's body focused on how he looked at the autopsy, not at the crime scene. In the motion for a new trial, Innocence Network partners attempted to call a pathologist who pointed to the victim's clear rigor mortis in the crime scene video, and other case information. The pathologist concluded that the victim could not have been dead longer than 36 hours, or nearly half a day after Mr. Knight had left Massachusetts.

Mr. Knight maintains his innocence. The proof and reasons he should be granted a new trial are significant.

TAKE ACTION: Ask Suffolk County District Attorney, Rachael Rollins, who was elected in 2018, to conduct an independent review of Mr. Knight's case and grant him a new trial.

LETTER WRITING TIPS:

- Be respectful and polite.
- Keep your tone formal.
- Stick to the facts; do not include judgement, feelings or political leanings.
- Be brief and concise.

SEND LETTERS TO:

The Honorable Rachael Rollins, District Attorney of Suffolk County
One Bulfinch Place
Boston, MA 02114
U.S.A.

SAMPLE LETTER:

Dear Madame District Attorney:

The case of Edward Knight has come to my attention. I am writing to respectfully ask your office to conduct an independent review of his case and grant him a new trial.

Mr. Knight's co-defendant's story does not align with the facts in this case. His alibi makes it impossible for him to have committed the crime. And there were no fingerprints, forensics, or anything else suggesting it was Mr. Knight who killed the victim, or had ever been inside the victim's apartment, except the co-defendant's testimony.

Edward Knight has spent more than 20 years in prison. Please consider looking closely into the details, conduct an independent review of his case and grant him a new trial.

Thank you in advance for your immediate attention to this matter. I will be following this case closely, and appreciate your leadership on it.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

[Your title, if applicable]

[Your organization, if applicable]

[Your address]

[City] [State] [Zip]

[Country]