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Contact: Dave George; 631-885-3565; ddgeorge23@gmail.com

*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

***STATEMENT: RELEASE AGING PEOPLE IN PRISON CAMPAIGN
CALLS OUT AG WILLIAM BARR'S COMMENTS AGAINST
SENTENCING OLDER PEOPLE TO PRISON***

(New York, NY) – Today, the Release Aging People in Prison (RAPP) Campaign, a grassroots criminal justice advocacy campaign based in New York State, released the following statement on comments made by U.S. Attorney General William Barr before the House Judiciary Committee defending his reduction of the sentencing recommendation for Roger Stone. Specifically, AG Barr asked rhetorically: “Do you think it is fair for a 67-year-old man to be sent to prison for 7 to 9 years?”

“Regardless of whether Roger Stone should have had his sentence reduced and ultimately received a pardon, Attorney General Barr’s comments throw into sharp relief the reality of the prison industrial complex and what most people believe justice means. There was a crisis of aging and dying in prisons across the United States before COVID-19 spread like wildfire through the facilities and amid this pandemic the situation has only become even more dire. Fair and meaningful opportunities for redemption and release, not perpetual punishment, must be made available to all people behind bars, or else we’ll continue to have mass COVID deaths in prisons. Of course, AG Barr is a hypocrite, having supported racist mass criminalization and the death penalty for decades before now defending the release of an older white man in a moment in which hundreds of thousands of mostly Black and Latinx older people in prison are at greater risk. It’s time officials at all levels of government go beyond words and take swift, bold action by immediately granting far-reaching emergency release to incarcerated older people before it’s too late.”

BACKGROUND: There are roughly 275,000 older people in state and federal prisons across the country. The large majority of the 745 confirmed COVID deaths in U.S. incarceration facilities were incarcerated older adults.

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