

To the Honorable Richard Ilkka;

I write this letter to you as a friend of Jim Carter. I have known Jim and his wife Mary Jo for most of my life. They grew up with much of my family and have lived in the same community, attending the same schools, church, and countless events over the years. Throughout my youth I would have considered Jim to be merely a friend of the family. In 2004 my cousin/best friend Ben passed away. In the months and years to follow, I found Jim and Mary Jo to be a huge part of my healing journey.

Having never experienced anything like the death of someone so close to me, I was lost. I had many loving friends and family members trying to support me, but all of them thought that talking about what happened was the best and only therapy. I, however wasn't ready to talk about it. I knew Ben was gone and I didn't need to say it out loud to believe it. This is where Jim came in. He offered a listening ear, if that's what I wanted. He offered fun distractions, if that's what I wanted. He offered spiritual guidance, if that's what I wanted. Jim was available to help where, when, and how I wanted help. He was never pushy or forceful in any direction. If I wanted to be mad about the loss, that was ok. If I wanted to celebrate the stories and the memories I had, that was ok. Jim was one of only a few people that really understood that I needed to take a different path of healing than most. I needed time and I needed to find constructive things to fill the void in my days that would have been spent with my best friend.

Having no kids of his own, Jim possesses a unique ability to nurture and mentor kids. He is not exhausted from the constant physical and emotional stresses of parenting. He hasn't been financially drained by putting kids through sports and music lessons and ever-changing clothing trends, etc. All of these burdens that Jim lives without give him more patience, more time, and more money for when an opportunity arises for him to help someone in need. When I needed a distraction from the grief I was feeling, Jim would find something fun to do. We went fishing, he taught me how to drive a stick shift in their little sports car, he set me up with my first plane ride, etc. He always came up with something, and asked for nothing in return. Jim wanted nothing more than to see me happy again.

With enough time passing, I found peace and was able to start living life again. I went off to college for a few years, lived with new people in new places, and experienced new things. Eventually making my way back to Forest Lake, I started my career, bought a house, got married, and now have two beautiful children. Because of Jim's patience, compassion, and eagerness to help, I made it through the hardest days of my life. Now instead of spending time trying to heal from the past, we spend time together celebrating the present. Our families get together regularly for birthdays, weddings, or even just dinner and a bonfire.

Jim is a career mentor. He has dedicated his life to helping others, much like the way he helped me. Whether it be through his time volunteering at the church, his long-distinguished career as a teacher, his dedicated marriage, or his commitment to his friends and family, he helps anyone in need. I am grateful for all that he has done for me and my family. Which is why I reached out to him as soon as I heard about the charges. I wanted the chance to tell the court my story and let them know who Jim Carter is to me. Jim has done so much good in his life and will continue to do good, because that who he is.

I ask that you please consider all of this throughout the rest of the court process and I thank

you for your time.

Sincerely: Shawn Williamson

*Shawn Williamson* 8/31/22



MINNESOTA  
JUDICIAL  
BRANCH

August 10, 2022

To the Honorable Richard Ilkka;

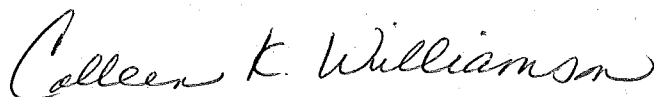
We have known Jim Carter and his wife Mary Jo for most of our lives. Our families are all lifelong residents of the same small town. We have attended the same schools and church and have known and associated with many of the same people. Our parents were friends, as were many of our siblings. We have become closer friends as adults, and especially since Jim married Mary Jo. We see and visit with them at church, go to each other's houses, see them at community events, dinners and fundraisers. They have attended our children's weddings, family celebrations and funerals.

When we first heard of the charges against Jim from a family member we were in complete shock and disbelief. We know Jim to be nothing but an outstanding citizen. A man of strong faith and conviction of the church, a mentor and counselor to our youth as an amazing teacher and religious education instructor. Jim personally helped our teen son through the loss of his best friend to suicide. Jim spent many hours with him sharing his faith, beliefs, time and caring love. Bringing our son through his deepest grief. We are not sure where our son would have ended up if not for Jim and his counseling and guidance.

Your honor we sincerely request mercy and leniency for Jim. The long history of his highly regarded teaching career, community and church involvement, and his lifelong residency all speak to the upstanding citizen he is. These charges have already had a negative emotional and mental strain on Jim. He is frightened every time the doorbell rings, fearing for the safety and security of himself and his wife. He has dedicated his adult life to the education of our youth, not just in an academic sense, but teaching life skills, how to be a respectful, honest person, to give back to others, the true meaning of hard work and seeing a job through to completion. Jim is a devoted husband to Mary Jo, a loving brother, uncle, and a great friend, always willing to help others. Thank you, your honor, for taking the time to read and consider our letter and we hope that you also see the honest, loving, God fearing person that we know Jim to be.

Sincerely,

Mike and Colleen Williamson



MARY JO A. JENSEN-CARTER  
143 LAKE STREET SOUTH  
FOREST LAKE, MN 55025

August 15, 2022

Honorable Richard Ilkka  
Washington County District Court  
Stillwater, MN 55082

RE: James E. Carter

Dear Judge Ilkka:

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of my husband, James (Jim) Carter. I have known Jim since 1996, and we have been married since October, 1998. Although I did not meet Jim until 1996, we are both lifelong residents of Forest Lake, Minnesota, and have been involved in many community activities. We are four years different in age so we didn't meet when we were younger, but we both knew each other's family members and had many mutual acquaintances before we actually met. Although no marriage is perfect, I believe that Jim and I have a very strong marriage. We love each other, communicate well, and always want the best for each other. We also share a strong Christian faith, which has been something we have had to lean on heavily in recent months.

I first learned of the potential charges against Jim when the Washington County Sheriff's Office served a search warrant at our house early one morning. Needless to say that was a difficult day and immediately brought home to me the seriousness of the situation. Several days later, I came home from work and could not find Jim. Upon contacting the Washington County jail, I was told that he had been arrested. Shortly thereafter, I learned of the serious charges against him. Both Jim and I have taken the charges very seriously throughout this entire two year process and have done everything we can to cooperate with the court system.

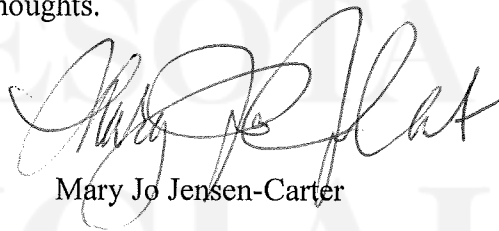
As an officer of the court, I understand the respect and weight that must be given to the jury verdict. However, I am asking that you show Jim mercy in your sentencing decision. Jim has been a very successful teacher for many years, and I have personally heard many students and parents praise his teaching abilities and the care he has shown to his students. I know how hard he tried to do what was best for his students and how much he really cared about them. When we were out in public, it was commonplace for students and parents to come over to chat with "Mr. Carter". Throughout his more than 20 years of teaching, I never heard anything negative about his relationships with his students from anyone.

Jim has a very deep faith and was a volunteer at our church years before I met him. He has continued his service during our marriage volunteering at various events, serving as a Eucharistic minister and teaching faith formation classes, among other things. Jim is a wonderful husband to me and goes out of his way to make my life better. He is also an integral

part of my family and participates in all of our family occasions. He spends time with my elderly parents on a regular basis and assists in taking them to doctor's appointments and helping them with anything they might need.

This entire legal process has been extremely difficult for Jim. His previously stellar reputation in the community was irreparably broken when the charges were initially announced, which was devastating to him. He felt that he lost his entire identity in that he really identified himself as a teacher, and that was no longer an option for him. Shortly after the charges were announced, he became seriously depressed. At my suggestion, he began taking antidepressants and seeing a counselor within weeks of the charges being filed. Some of the most difficult aspects of the entire process were the times he was arrested and the days he spent in jail. He was traumatized by those events for many weeks after they took place, and he is still traumatized when he talks about those events. I sincerely worry about how he would cope with additional time in jail.

I have no doubt that Jim feels extreme remorse that this situation has caused so much pain to so many people. We have often talked about how excruciatingly difficult the trial was for everyone involved, and how we wish there would have been a way to avoid all the pain. I know Jim is willing to do whatever he can to make amends, and I, along with his many friends and family, are willing to do whatever we can to help him do that. I would ask that you take into consideration Jim's crime free record, his many years of service to his students, his church, and his family, and his good character when determining his sentence. Jim is a good man, with a kind heart who has found himself in a very difficult situation. He knows his life going forward will be different and difficult, but he just wants to do what he can to move forward in a positive way. Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts.



Mary Jo Jensen-Carter

## *Val Parranto Davis*

1665 Prosperity Road  
St. Paul, MN 55106

August 25, 2022

Honorable Richard Ilkka  
Tenth Judicial District  
Washington County  
14949 62<sup>nd</sup> St. No.  
PO Box 3802  
Stillwater, MN 55082


Dear Judge Ilkka,

I have known Mary Jo Jensen Carter for better than thirty years. I have known Jim carter since their wedding. They have always been good friends. They have always been utterly devoted to one another.

I realize the seriousness of the charges against Jim and am quite surprised at his conviction. In fact I am surprised that any such charges were made. Still, I also realize that it can't be easy to sentence anyone under these circumstances and you have my sincerest respect in the task set before you.

In doing so, please consider Jim's age and the fact that he has never been accused of anything like this before. Please also consider favorably his exemplary teaching career up till now. He has always gotten along so well with kids. I have taught Faith Formation at my parish for the last 35 years and that is something Jim and I have had in common. I teach middle school and high school aged children and sometimes they can be a challenge. Jim always connected flawlessly with his students. Please consider whether the fact that he may never teach in any capacity again is punishment enough. I know it would be to me. I don't know what else I can say, except to ask your mercy in this matter.

Yours truly,



Val Parranto Davis

Maryam Gil  
22960 Hayward Ave. N  
Forest Lake MN 55025

August 30, 2022  
RE: Mr. Jim Carter

To The Honorable Judge Ilkka,

I am writing on behalf of Jim Carter on his case. We have been next-door neighbors and friends for over four years. I was surprised to hear about his recent case as he has always been a solid person. It is for this reason I am happy to write a letter of reference regarding the matter of child sexual abuse. I understand the seriousness of the matter, however, I hope the court will show some leniency. In the time we have known him, he has proven to be of a fine and responsible character. In general, Jim is accountable, known for being a dedicated husband, and a reliable member of the community, so this offense was quite unexpected. Jim Carter has always been an upright character in the community.

As his neighbor during his relationship with Jim and Cheryl Hagen (Carter's parents), I noticed that they had a good relationship including when Jim Carter and his wife (Mary Jo Carter) went on a trip, Cheryl had a house key of Jim Carter and checked the house every other day to make sure everything was fine. She dropped off her son Carter to check the house and visited them often. I met them at Jim Carter's house, and I talked to them during a party, sitting on their deck.

In addition to our friendship, he is an unusually upstanding member in the neighborhood. It's unfortunate that while he was being kind and helpful to his students, it resulted in this accusation. It is my sincere hope the court takes this letter into consideration at the time of sentencing. Despite the current case, I still believe Jim Carter to be an honorable individual, a valuable member of my community, and a good human being.

Sincerely,  
Maryam Gil

*Maryam Gil*  
8/30/22

Hennepin and Washington County Librarian  
949-923-0793  
[mgil@hclib.org](mailto:mgil@hclib.org)  
[Maryam.gil@co.washington.mn.us](mailto:Maryam.gil@co.washington.mn.us)

Natalie B. Fitzpatrick  
1020 South Shore Drive  
Forest Lake, MN 55025

Honorable Richard Ilkka  
Washington County Courthouse  
14949 62<sup>nd</sup> St N  
Stillwater, MN 55082

August 30, 2022

Re: James Carter  
Case number 82-CR-20-3266

To the Honorable Richard Ilkka,

I would like to take a moment of your time to reflect on the sentencing determination of James Carter.

Even though Mr. Carter and I both grew up in the same town, I formally met Jim when he started dating his wife, Mary Jo, a friend from my childhood. During these 30 plus years, my husband and I have spent countless days and evenings with Jim and his wife. We were neighbors for 20 years and I also attend the same Church as the Carters. I consider both of them very good friends. I personally believe that Jim is fundamentally a good human being.

We are all aware of the seriousness of the charges for which Jim has been found guilty. I feel that probation, if an option, would be an appropriate punishment for his crimes. I am not aware that Jim has any previous criminal convictions. He has complied with the all of his bail conditions. He has his family and friends to support him, including his wife. As a life long resident of Forest Lake, he has developed many connections to this community.

Jim is a very gifted human being. He is kind and caring. He is a devoted and supportive husband and a very caring friend. The Church and his faith are very important to him. Jim is a man that is capable of learning from his mistakes. I think Jim will be able to contribute to society in many ways, if he is able.

Sincerely,



Natalie B. Fitzpatrick



Ronalee Ashbach  
84-1100 Bruner Rd.  
Honaunau, HI 96726

July 21, 2022

Dear Honorable Richard Ilkka,

Jim and I met through a mutual family friend in 2005 when I was visiting family in my hometown of Forest Lake, MN while at the time I lived in Alaska. This friend was close to both of us and we continued this friendship while visiting in Mn and vacationing in Florida together. While visiting Mn often and also having the pleasure of Jim and Jo visiting my home in Alaska several times, I've seen Jim's faith grow. The biggest thing Jim and I share together is our Christian faith. Each of these visits inspired me to continue this growth in my faith as I saw the continued Christian strength in Jim. Our favorite time together was our early mornings with devotions.

When Jim and Jo called me in September 2020 to tell me of his arrest and charges against him, I was in shock that these allegations were valid. Especially when I had just returned from a visit to Forest Lake and seen how Carter had worked with Jim on the construction remodel project of their home. Carter was taking as much pride as Jim in the work he had done with Jim.

These past years and months since the arrest, I've witnessed in personal visits and frequent calls the strength and humbleness Jim and Jo have had to maintain in their faith with their heads held up, knowing they had to go to trial and daily praying that the prosecutors, jury and your Honorable self could see the truth of their personal desire to give good opportunities to the boys. Asking for you to recognize that Jim has already paid so much in time with this holding his life in imbalance while he continued to try to find work, be a good friend and husband to Jo and grow in faith. Sentencing community service would benefit many others in a positive way versus time in prison for these allegations. We are praying for your mercy in sentencing.

Sincerely yours,



**July 14, 2022**

the Honorable Richard Ilkka  
Washington County Courthouse

**Dear Judge Ilkka:**

This letter is in support of James E. Carter (Jim), who is my friend and is also married to Mary Jo, who I have known since junior high. I met Jim more than 20 years ago when he started seeing Mary Jo. We have spent many Christmas holidays together, and vacationed together as well. Jim also asked me to speak to his students on more than one occasion about engineering and my experience as the Deputy Commissioner and Chief Engineer for MnDOT (2013 – 2019). He wanted to show his students how an education and a career can be highly rewarding and interesting. I was happy to do this.

It was a shocking and sad experience to learn of the charges that were leveled against Jim in August, 2020. He and Mary Jo called me to tell me about the events, so that I didn't hear about it in the news. To say I was surprised is an understatement. It would never occur to me that anyone would accuse Jim, who spent several years teaching kids skills for their future lives, of such crimes. I recognize that this is an incredibly serious situation, and that all evidence must be weighed. Due to the shock of the situation, I spent a morning with Jim at his home to be of support and to help out as needed, while Mary Jo was at work. I will continue offering that support, and I know many other friends and family will as well.

Realizing the significance of this case, and its ramifications, I ask for your mercy for Jim. He has always shown kindness and courtesy to me. Jim is a compassionate and kind person, he helps people in need, he is a devoted christian (he and Jo gave me a book that also helps me in 2014 – I use it every day), he deeply loves his wife and helps to care for her family and elderly parents, taking them to appointments. Jim is a 'since birth' resident of

Forest Lake, and he and Jo are strong members of that community. I know that Jim took his teaching responsibility very seriously and provided the best curriculum he could to help young people. The impact of this accusation has been significant on both Jim and Jo. Counselors, therapists, and anxiety support have been employed to help them cope with the immensity of this situation. They are rightfully concerned about the outcome.

I know that they pray (as do others) every day for mercy. I hope that they can find it. Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Mulvihill, P.E.

Friend of Jim and Mary Jo

July 27, 2022

Dear Honorable Richard Ilkka,

I am writing this letter on behalf of Jim Carter. I met Jim four years ago when I was a Forest Lake Area Middle School para-professional. I worked with students in his Industrial Tech. classroom. I was in awe of his commitment to each student's personal safety. In other words, not allowing any student to operate the necessary power tool(s) without having passed an extensive safety test.

As a former elementary public school teacher, and as a mandated reporter, I am always concerned with each student's personal safety both physical and emotional. I never witnessed any behavior or heard any comments from anyone, student or faculty, that would diminish Jim Carter's sterling character.

I saw Jim's attention to detail in his teaching of woodworking and one day asked if he could do a "carpenter's project" at my home on his own time. Jim made numerous trips between my home in Ham Lake and his woodworking shop in Forest Lake. He was a great communicator ... always informing me of

the "next step" in the project while continuously asking for my input until we arrived at the best solution. Throughout this experience he has certainly earned my respect for treating me fairly. The outcome has greatly exceeded my expectations.

I have come to know Jim as a man of deep Christian faith and personal integrity. Do not hesitate to contact me directly either by letter or phone.

Lastly, I would recommend using Jim's excellent woodworking skills to the benefit of others less fortunate in our communities. Organizations like Habitat for Humanity, Thrivent Builds and others could use Jim's expertise in a productive, positive way.

The United States judicial system has ancient roots (Exodus 18:15-26) and I am asking for mercy on Jim's behalf. May God grant you, Judge Ilkka, wisdom in your decision making.

Sincerely,  
Cindy Kallestad  
16620 Bataan St. NE.  
Ham Lake, MN 55304  
(h) 763-434-3366  
(c) 763-452-8062

MICHAEL J. IANNACONE

6405 Nordic Circle

Edina, Minnesota 55439

651-592-0044

July 27, 2022

The Honorable Richard Ilkka  
District Court Judge  
Washington County Courthouse  
14949 62nd Street North  
P.O. Box 3802  
Stillwater, MN 55082

Re: James Carter

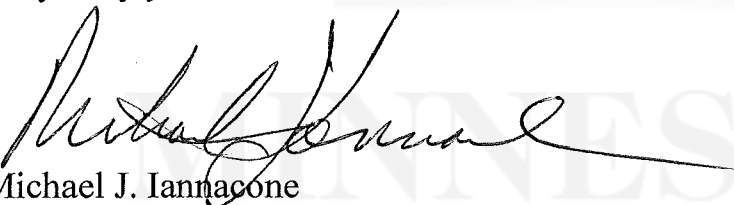
Dear Judge Ilkka:

I am writing to tell you about my knowledge of James Carter. I am a retired lawyer, admitted to practice in 1975 and retired in 2020. I practiced in the areas of bankruptcy and credit and was a bankruptcy trustee from 1977 to 2017. I met Jim over 25 years ago when he was dating his wife Mary Jo Jensen-Carter (Jo). I office shared with Sheridan Buckley, then the Buckley & Jensen law firm since 1980. Jo started working there during her last year at William Mitchell. My wife and I met Jim at various office social gatherings. I learned that Jim had some post high school education and was working on his college degree while working during the day. I know the commitment this requires since I am a graduate of the William Mitchell night program. Jim continued his education after marrying Jo and then became certified as a special education teacher. Jim first taught special education and later industrial arts obtaining the necessary certification. I personally know of Jim's abilities since Jim assisted me with mounting a flat screen TV in a space which he converted for a space designed for a tube TV and replacing toilets. A noticeable characteristic that I observed is the enthusiasm Jim brings to whatever job he undertakes. When the TV job became an all-day job instead of the 2 hours originally expected, there was not a complaint or hint of resentment from Jim. Jim was the same when speaking about his teaching and his commitment to ensuring that he was prepared each day and the he took care that his students understood the material and continued to progress through each topic of instruction. Even after my retirement, I have maintained my friendship with Jim.

I learned of Jim's criminal case from Jo at a lunch. I realized what a serious matter the case is especially in a teacher student situation. I also could tell from Jo's demeanor and description of the charges how seriously she and Jim realized the charges were.

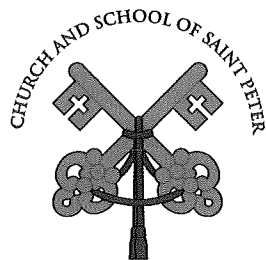
You now have the difficult job of determining the appropriate sentence for Jim after his convictions. I am certain you will consider Jim's entire life which was free of any prior criminal conduct. Jim and Jo have lived in Forest Lake their entire lives so their ties to the community are long standing and steadfast. Jim has been an active member of St. Peter's Catholic Church in Forest Lake. I recently spent a long afternoon with Jim and Jo and know that their love and commitment to each other remains strong. Jim is very grateful for the unwavering support Jo has provided and they are determined to face the uncertain future united. I urge you to impose the least possible sentence in this case. The Jim I know is an honorable and law-abiding man.

Very truly yours,



Michael J. Iannacone

JUDICIAL  
BRANCH



...YOU ARE PETER, AND UPON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH...  
(MATTHEW 16:18)

July 26, 2022

Dear Honorable Richard Ilkka,

My name is Father Daniel Bodin, pastor of the Church of St. Peter, Forest Lake, Minnesota. I am writing to you on behalf of Mr. James Carter. He has been a longtime parishioner, neighbor and friend who I first met when I was assigned to St. Peter's in 2012. Over the years I have gotten to know Jim and his wife Mary Jo through their participation at Sunday liturgies, his dedicated service to our Faith Formation Programs, and as a neighbor.

I am well aware of Mr. Carter's case involving criminal sexual misconduct with two minors at his residence in Forest Lake. I have also read about the case in the *Forest Lake Times*. With his conviction, I likewise understand that Jim now faces charges that may include a lengthy prison sentence or probation and that he will be required to register as a sex offender with the state.

When these charges of sexual misconduct first broke, the Church of St. Peter was directed by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis to solicit all parents whose students were either taught or in close contact with Mr. Carter during Confirmation Classes at the parish. Our investigation was to determine if any misconduct occurred between Mr. Carter and a student on parish grounds. As of today, we have not received any allegations, but only letters of praise and gratitude for the work Mr. Carter has done to instruct and encourage the youth to live and practice their faith. Therefore, I ask clemency on your behalf when sentencing Mr. Carter with the charges that have been brought before him regarding this matter.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev. Daniel Bodin".

Rev. Daniel Bodin  
Pastor



2 August 2022

To: The Honorable Richard Ilkka  
From: Joy N.B. Carlson  
Re: James E. Carter

During my tenure as the board chair and communications coordinator (1999-2007) at North Lakes Academy Charter School in Forest Lake, I had the privilege of approving the hire of and working with James (Jim) Carter as he served in special education for middle school students. He is the faithful husband to Mary Jo, a long-time friend of mine from high school days.

The case involving Jim's sexual misconduct weighs heavily on the minds and hearts of his friends and family. The gravity of the charges/conviction made against him require careful consideration. As a one-time colleague in education and a friend over the years, I am tasked with determining in my own mind whether I will stand in further judgment over Jim's character.

I cannot in good conscience judge him harshly; I know him to be a kind and compassionate man with a strong faith in God; he consistently serves his family, friends, and community (he is a lifelong resident of my hometown, Forest Lake). I observed him to be a caring teacher committed to the education, welfare, and wellbeing of his students. His dedication to seeing his students succeed was evident every day of his teaching career. Even on days when the demands of special education pressed in, Jim persisted in working in the best interest of his students. His behaviors outside the classroom were equally caring and intentionally outward focused. While at the charter school, I observed his willingness to jump in and help on many occasions. He always looked for ways to serve others – both students and colleagues.

The weight of this conviction has torn at Jim's heart, and while he has leaned into his faith and maintained a generally positive attitude, he is heartbroken at the prospect of this conviction haunting him the rest of his life. He understands how his intentions could be misunderstood in a world where kindness is not always the rule. I believe he deserves mercy and the right to move forward with an eye toward ongoing service to the people around him.

Thank you for considering Jim's depth of good character as you determine his sentencing.

Respectfully,



Joy N.B. Carlson

jnbc/



Bridges and Pathways  
1068 S Lake St. #109  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
Fax: 651-982-6035  
[www.bridges-pathways.com](http://www.bridges-pathways.com)

July 31, 2022

The Honorable Judge Richard Ilkka;

I first met Jim Carter (D.O.B. 5/20/1964) on 7/16/2020. I function in the capacity of his psychologist. I continue to see Jim on a regular basis. We conduct our sessions at Bridges and Pathways in Forest Lake, Minnesota.

I am fully aware of the seriousness of Jim's recent conviction for sexual molestation. My understanding is that he will be required to register as a sex offender. He is awaiting sentencing in September. I understand that his crime is a felony.

I ask the court for mercy in sentencing Jim. Jim has a long history of being a valued shop teacher in his school district as evidenced by his many years of service and his renewed contracts. I can personally speak for my experience with Jim as his psychologist. Jim has been responsible in attending all his therapy sessions for the past two years. He has demonstrated an open mind in therapy as based on practicing the many tools he has been given in therapy. He has been able to openly share his feelings during sessions. I have not noticed any guardedness during any of his sessions. He also clearly has a very close relationship with his wife Jo. This has been evidenced by her attending multiple therapy sessions to support Jim.

Sincerely,

Janaka Hanvey, Ph.D.  
Licensed Psychologist

To: Honorable Richard Ilkka  
From: Tom and Toni Haas  
Date: August 3, 2022  
Re: James Carter

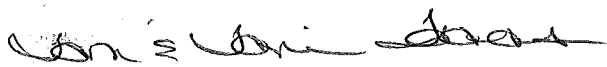
We have known Jim Carter since he married his wife Jo Jensen Carter, and moved into her home, to be our immediate next door neighbors over 25 years ago. In that time, we've come to realize what a treasure they are to our neighborhood as a whole, and most especially to our lives. We continue to see them as an extension of our family, including grown children and grandchildren, both young and adult. Besides the normal neighborly gatherings w/ meals shared, borrowing of tools, consulting on projects, and watching each other's houses and pets, we share the same faith, and as a result, had a chance to travel w/ them on an extended trip to Italy.

We have shared this "journey" that has taken over Jim's life since it's inception, when we noticed the emergency vehicles parked at their home on the first day, and checked in to see if everyone was all right. We have a unique perspective, in that we were acquainted with one of his accusers, who was spending his free time at the Carter home and was being mentored by Jim while they lived next door to us on South Shore Drive. Jim was willing to instruct Carter on how to complete a few of my projects, specifically one for the church's bell choir and he was counseled on how to winterize our jet ski, along with trimming our trees. We witnessed more of this when the construction was going on in their Lake Street house, as we followed the progress the two of them were making every time we stopped in to see the updates. I appreciated the fact that Carter was willing to take over my "cat-sitting" detail, when it wasn't as convenient since they had moved to their Hayward house, instead of living right next door.

While we certainly realize the seriousness of the accusations, we would hope for your consideration of Jim's past history. The Jim we know is devoted to his church, his wife, his family, his friends, and his community, probably in that order. He has a soft spot in his heart for the aging population, knowing how to include them in our circle and willing to attend to their problems relating to owning (and staying) in their homes. This case has sent him down a depressing path, and I have no doubt that serving jail time would not be beneficial to him (or anyone else). Certainly, with all his talents, his sentencing time could be better spent in doing some form of community service, of which we know there is a great need.

I had the honor of spending time during Jim's trial in your courtroom, and thank you for your consideration of this information, as it comes time for Jim's sentencing. If we can be of further assistance in this matter, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,  
Tom and Toni Haas  
651-308-2355



August 8, 2022

To the Honorable Richard Ilkka:

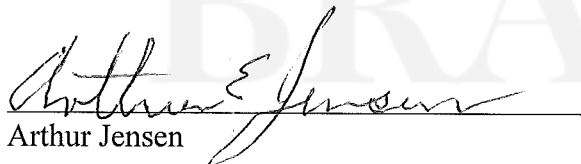
We are Arthur and Joann Jensen. We are the parents of Mary Jo A. Jensen-Carter. James "Jim" Carter is our son-in-law.

Art was first introduced to Jim through his father, Richard Carter, at the American Legion in the early 1990s. Joann was introduced to Jim in 1996 when he started dating Mary Jo. Jim became our son-in-law in October of 1998.

Joann had seen Jim attending Mass at St. Peter's Catholic Church for a few years before being officially introduced to him in 1996. Jim takes turns along with our immediate family to provide rides to appointments including doctors, chiropractors, etc. He also takes Joann to Church.

We worry if he receives a long sentence how that might negatively affect our daughter's future, her health and the financial burden it could cause her.

Sincerely,

  
Arthur Jensen

  
Joann Jensen

To the Honorable Richard Illka:

Aug 12, 2022

Mary Jo Carter and I have been friends since the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade throughout junior high, high school and college to our current time. I met Jim Carter about 25 years ago when they were dating. I was in their wedding as a bridesmaid. So, I feel I have a definite knowledge of their relationship and partnership as a married couple.

When I found out about the situation-with the police coming and searching the house and taking Jim into custody – I was flabbergasted to say the least. Mary Jo had called me the day after, and I went over to help in any way I could. It was heart breaking to see how affected both of them were, not knowing how to help alleviate their pain. Jim has always taken his career and his students very seriously and his number one goal is to see them succeed.

I wish you could see how they are together and how they have strengthened their relationship over the years through love of family and friends and their love of the Lord. They are two parts of a whole. Throughout this ordeal, I have seen them stop and just pray for strength and guidance. Putting Jim in jail seems like a senseless thing to do. He has already been in “prison” since this began over two years ago. He has lost much as has Mary Jo. They have seen “good” friends snub and judge them without knowing the facts. They have had to reestablish new protocols when family or friends get together for celebrations. Always, checking to make sure that Jim follows the rules that were given to him. Yet, they have done so with grace and not griped about what they had to do. They both have resolved to get through this with the power of God and hopefully your mercy in the sentencing. Jim and Mary Jo have been a leader in the St Peter’s Catholic Church for years. They are known in the community as people who will help those in need and have based their lives on the service of community and giving. Jim does not have a criminal background and has lived in Forest Lake all his life. He loved teaching and was so excited when a student who was a trouble maker would take his class and come to him and say that was he glad he had taken the class, and would show a remarkable change of attitude. Isn’t that what teaching is about? Both Jim and Mary Jo have a deep respect for each other and their gratefulness that they were able to help many people and kids throughout their marriage.

Again, I hope you consider my thoughts while you think about this sentencing. Thank you for your time.



Lory Vincent

Genise R. Brothers  
725 N. Rose St.  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

August 6, 2022

To The Honorable Richard Ilkka,

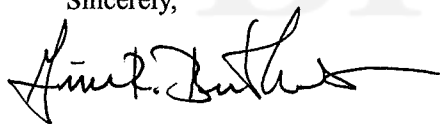
My name is Genise Brothers, and I am writing today on behalf of my friend James Carter. I have known Jim since 2015 when I began working with him at Century Junior High (now known as Forest Lake Area Middle School). During our time teaching together we became fast friends. Jim's kindness, good humor, dedication to the students, the community, his wife, friends, and faith are some traits that brought us together as friends.

In the summer of 2020, I was shocked to learn of the charges against Jim. A few weeks ago I was equally shocked at Jim's conviction. In truth, these very serious charges and the resulting conviction have clouded my thoughts and feelings when it comes to my friendship with Jim. However, I remain and will remain friends with Jim, and his wife Jo.

Your honor, as you consider Jim's sentence, I would ask, as Jim's friend that you consider leniency. Jim is an asset to the community of Forest Lake Minnesota, and there are many in the community that feel as I do when it comes to the positive impact he has had on the lives of many. As a colleague, I was able to see the positive impact made by Jim in our school. He was a visible and vocal student advocate who took initiative on projects aimed at helping students make good choices. An example of this was making a pledge wall. This wall was a follow-up to our school's anti-vaping campaign, and the pledge was an idea constructed and implemented by Jim and his advisory class. Even now, despite the charges and conviction, Jim is helping others within his community with his excellent talents as a builder and carpenter. He also took time last year to help my husband and I build a wonderful game table which was a wedding present for our daughter. Please allow Jim the opportunity to continue the good work he is doing for the people of Forest Lake.

In closing I want to thank you for your time in reading this letter. I know you must be very busy, and there is much to consider when it comes to this case. Again, I would simply ask for leniency for Jim. I ask this not just for Jim, but for those he is helping in the community, and for his wonderful and loving wife Jo.

Sincerely,



Genise R. Brothers

Honorable Richard Ilkka,

Jim and I are brothers. The third and fourth siblings in our family. Being very close in age, we spent a great deal of our childhoods together and continue that close relationship to this day.

The case and situation at hand is a serious matter. I became aware immediately and have been witness to the impact on not only all the families involved, but the community as well. While this is a serious matter, I would ask that the court and all those involved in deciding the fate of my brother, please consider Jim's contributions to the community. The side that most people have not had the opportunity to see.

Jim has been an outstanding member of our community. Over the course of his life, he has never been in trouble and has been viewed as a positive mentor to many. He volunteers for community events to raise money for charities, participates deeply within his church, including taking the pulpit to give the weekly reading, which he and his wife Jo often do. The commitment that Jim and his wife Jo have to each other is a shining example of what families and communities should strive toward.

As a respected teacher for many years within Forest Lake, Jim has also had a positive impact on many families. Often when Jim and I are together in public it is common for us to encounter past students, now young adults, who still call him Mr. Carter, thanking him for his mentoring and addressing him with respect. He always takes the time to stop and chat with those he encounters, no matter where he is or what he is doing. I have also been witness to countless parents who have expressed the same sentiment.

I have seen a man who smiled often, engaged life with an energetic enthusiasm, now approach life with only a fragment of that enthusiasm. His life been forever changed within the community, no longer able to participate freely within the community, something many of us take for granted until we lose that freedom. Along with those losses of freedom, Jim often expresses remorse and has states of depression and anxiety.

I ask the court for mercy. I believe that Jim has already been serving a sentence and will continue to so do under the conditions imposed on him over the last two plus years, impacting him, his family, and friends.

The question I pose to the court and all those who reside here today is this... beginning today, where and how could Jim best serve the community?

Sincerely,



Scott Carter  
A Loving Brother

John R. & Laurie A. Holmgren  
7496 North Shore Trl. N.  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
August 8th, 2022

Honorable Richard Ilkka  
Minnesota 10<sup>th</sup> District Court  
Washington Country Courthouse  
14949 62<sup>nd</sup> St,  
Stillwater, MN 55082

Your Honor: In reference to the sentencing of James Carter


My wife Laurie and I have known James (Jim) Carter for the past 30 years. Laurie and I met Jim through his wife, Mary Jo Jensen-Carter. During those years we have built a friendship around working together on church and community projects, spending time together enjoying common interests in sporting events, concerts, trying new restaurants, and attending church. The friendship has grown to include our respective families and circle of friends.

Jim and Jo brought the charges against him to our attention shortly after his arrest. To say they were/are embarrassed about all of this is a gross mis-understatement. While we believe Jim to be innocent of the charges, we know and understand the weight of the charges brought against Jim and accept the decision of the jury. We will continue to support Jim and Jo as best we can through the coming months and years.

We believe Jim to be honest, trustworthy, and always willing to help. Jim has served in helping to make the Forest Lake community a better place through his years of teaching special education students, industrial technology students, and religious education students at St. Peter's Catholic Church; by being part of the Justice in Community program run by the City of Forest Lake; and by mentoring dozens of students who were having trouble. Jim helped a few of our family members deal with unexpected illnesses and death, and he has offered an ear whenever needed. In our experience, Jim always puts others before himself.

On his behalf we respectfully request your honor consider all the good Jim has done when coming to a decision on his sentencing.

Respectfully,

  
John R Holmgren

  
Laurie A. Holmgren



MARY SCHUMACHER  
920 11<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE S.E.  
FOREST LAKE, MINNESOTA 55025

August 15, 2022

Judge Richard Illka  
Washington County District Court  
Stillwater, MN 55082

Dear Judge Illka:

I met James Carter about twenty-five years ago. From then to now, I would often hear about him. Most of it was about his education and teaching. Since my husband was also an industrial arts teacher, I liked following Jim's career.

I made contact with Jim about nine months ago when I heard he was a handyman. He has done many small jobs at my house. His work has been excellent. He is dependable, reliable, and I trust him completely.

Please consider this when deciding on his future.

*Mary Schumacher*

Mary Schumacher

Dear Honorable Richard Ilkka,

My name is Amy Swanson and I have known Jim my whole life as I am his niece. I developed a close relationship with Jim and his wife, Jo, around my teen years. I would spend time at their house during the summer and was fortunate to travel with them to California one year as well. Now as an adult, our relationship has only grown as Jim and Jo have also developed a close relationship with my husband and three daughters. We visit each other multiple times throughout the year and my family has also vacationed in Florida with Jim and Jo many times.

I was made aware of this case when the initial charges were filed and have been following the updates as the case progressed towards a trial. I was able to attend the majority of the trial in support of Jim. I wanted to hear testimony firsthand from all parties since we had the opportunity to meet Carter and his family at a gathering at Jim and Jo's house where it was evident both Carter and Jim took a lot of pride in the work they completed. I truly believe in our judicial process and understand the importance of decisions made by the jury of one's peers.

My ask is that you have some grace and grant mercy in the sentence for Jim. The result of this case has impacted Jim in many ways including emotionally, physically and financially. Jim has been an exemplary citizen his entire life, has been active in his church and community and had a distinguished teaching career. He has devoted his life in guiding individuals to develop a good work ethic and make decisions to lead them down a path of success. Jim ensures people know they have someone to support them as they go through that journey.

Sincerely,



Amy M. Swanson

GENE AND RUTH GERDESMEIER  
FOREST LAKE, MN 55025

August 22, 2022

Honorable Richard Illka  
Washington County District Court  
Stillwater, MN 55082

Dear Judge Illka:

We met Jim Carter in the fall of 2019 when he and his wife, Jo, had just purchased the dilapidated property south of our townhouse complex. We got to know Jim better in 2020, when Covid 19 was in full lock down and he was teaching remotely and working on the remodeling of the house. We learned of the charges against Jim in the summer of 2020.

Before the charges became public, we met the boys that were working with Jim on the remodeling of the house. During our interactions with the boys, we observed them to have a good working relationship with Jim, and they seemed to be happy working with Jim and earning some money. On at least one occasion, Jim and Carter helped us to gather up our lake weeds and brought them to the compost for us. Carter also offered to help us with other work on our property if we wanted the help.

Over the last couple of years, Jim has done a great job remodeling the house and taking care of the property, which was certainly in disrepair before he and Jo purchased it. We appreciate the care he has taken to improve the property, as it improves the neighborhood. Jim is always ready to help if we need work done at our property too, and he has assisted us with projects on several occasions. We believe Jim and Jo are good neighbors.

We would ask that you consider Jim's history of community service and church involvement when determining his sentence. We believe that based upon his lack of criminal history, the community would be better served if he could continue to use his skills in helping the community rather than being required to serve time in jail. Thank you for your consideration.

*Sincerely yours,*

*Ruth Gerdesmeier*  
*Gene Gerdesmeier*