

24 July 2017

Dear Deval

A note to say that I had shaken off a liver cancer for several years after a group of oncologist at Boston Medical Center did some cutting and burning then a number of chemotherapy sessions. But the cancer, named Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HHC), has metastisized to the Lymph Nodes. As I might have written to you in the past, I contracted the Hepatitis-C virus during one of a number of visits to the prison's dental infirmary. I wrote an editorial about the dentist not having sterilizing equipment under a headline of "Dangerous Tools" which led the prison officials to fire me as editor of the inmate newspaper. It was too late for me, but I bet I may have saved many lives from contracting the virus. At Boston Medical Center oncologist Kevan Hartshorn say that I have less than three years to live even if I respond to treatment. One page five of his report, Hartshorn says "Overall poor prognosis due to advance HHC with estimated survival, assuming response to treatment, at 3 years." There are a number of clinical drug trials taking place in the cancer research space but I cannot participate in any of these clinical trials due to my status. Under state law, researchers are prohibit from using inmates as subjects to test experimental drugs. This is due to the well known Tuskegee experiments, where folks were infected with syphilis and other viruses then not offered medical intervention. Deval, the state has taken not only my health but thirty five years. You said any number of times that you might consider advocating for me again. I would like for you to consider writing a letter in support of a medical release to parole officials. I cannot imagine the horror of spending my last day of life in a bed, under six wool blankets, weighing 80 pounds, alone, in a cold prison infirmary. Please call our mutual friend John C. Archer at his home 978.777.5397. I have thought often times that my father's God is fond of testing our faith by afflicting us with what might seem like unbearable pain and suffering. In spite of all that has happened I remain a servant of

my father's God. Whatever the doctors say, I know that you and I both recognize that only God knows the day and hour that my earthy purpose has come to its finale. With regard to the criminal justice system, I have come to understand that if a court does not want to recognize certain truths then one can be capable of great indifference. There is a Persian proverb which says, if I remember it correctly, "If a man is asleep someone can wake him up. But if a man is only pretending to be asleep then nobody can awake him." Far too many people have pretended to be asleep Deval. Be well.

In Brotherhood,

Ben