



PRESS ADVISORY

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY!

For Immediate Release

Contact: Laura Jones
O: 202-822-6700, Cell: 202-425-4659

Eyes of the Nation on Harsh Sentencing Ruling: Sentencing Experts, Attorneys and Family Members of Prisoners to Respond

Groundswell of opposition to excessively long mandatory sentencing for
Weldon Angelos includes 29 former Judges and U.S. Attorneys

SALT LAKE CITY, UT: Advocates of fair and reasonable sentencing eagerly await the ruling of Judge Paul Cassell (D. Utah), as he struggles with inflexible mandatory sentencing laws that require a 61-year prison sentence for defendant Weldon Angelos, a first-time drug offender.

Expressing reservations about the mandated, no-parole sentence, Judge Cassell said, "This appears to be an extraordinarily long prison term," and ordered lawyers for both sides to weigh in on whether such a sentence violates the U.S. Constitution, which forbids cruel and unusual punishment.

In an unusual response to Cassell's request, 29 former federal judges and U.S. Attorneys filed a "friend of the court" brief arguing that the 61-year mandatory minimum sentence is grossly disproportionate to the crime and thus unconstitutional.

Judge Cassell, whose comprehensive opinion on the constitutionality of the federal sentencing guidelines following the Supreme Court's opinion in *Blakely v. Washington* has helped shape the national debate on federal sentencing, is expected to issue another groundbreaking opinion in the Angelos case.

WHAT: Media event immediately following the sentencing hearing, including national sentencing expert, relatives of Weldon Angelos, Angelos' defense attorney, legal experts, and family members of prisoners.

WHEN: September 14, 2004, around 4:30 PM or immediately following sentencing

WHERE: In front of courthouse, 350 South Main St., Salt Lake City, UT

WHO: **Julie Stewart**, Families Against Mandatory Minimums (FAMM) president
Zandrah Angelos, Weldon Angelos' wife
Jerome Mooney, Angelos' attorney
Mayor Rocky Anderson
Michael Goldsmith, professor of law, Brigham Young University, former vice chair of US Sentencing Commission
Erik Luna, associate professor of law, University of Utah
Also attended by family members of prisoners holding banner and signs

The press conference is sponsored by Families Against Mandatory Minimums, a national non-partisan non-profit organization that promotes just sentencing policies.
For more information, visit: www.famm.org.

###