

YOUNG LESBIANS FROM NEWARK NEED OUR SUPPORT!

On August 18, 2006, seven young African American lesbians traveled to the West Village from their homes in Newark for a regular night out. When walking down the street, a male bystander assaulted them with sexist and homophobic comments. The women tried to defend themselves, and a fight broke out. Thus began the women's nightmare for almost a year. Three of the women accepted plea offers. On June 14th, 2007 Venice Brown (19), Terrain Dandridge (20), Patreese Johnson (20), and Renata Hill (24) received sentences ranging from 3 ½ to 11 years in prison.

The targeted incarceration of people of color, youth, women and LGBTQNC people is unacceptable and unjust. These women needed protection, but what they're getting is imprisonment.

The women and their families now call on our communities for support. Their emotional and financial burdens have already been immense. These hardships will only continue as the women begin their prison terms and the process of appeal.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- **Pro-bono legal support:** Most if not all of the women need new lawyers for the appeal. Finding new counsel is the #1 priority for support. All leads and contacts welcome.
- **Media contacts and writers:** Journalists to report, community members to write op-eds, and media-savvy people to advise the families about working with media.
- **Pen pals:** Prison is profoundly isolating, as well as boring. Express your solidarity and prayers for the women's strength.
- **Money:** Some of the families have depleted their life savings paying legal fees. Also imagine: collect calls from prison, transportation costs upstate for prison visits, paying for prison commissary. Direct financial contributions (even \$10, \$20, \$30) are needed, along with people to organize fundraisers.
- **Diverse organizational support:** Building a public campaign requires support from all corners. If you think the sentences these women are receiving are too harsh, there is a place for your support.

NEXT COMMUNITY MEETING:

**Tuesday, July 10th at 6:30pm at the new office of FIERCE
located at 147 West 24th Street, 6th Floor
(between 6th & 7th Ave. – I/F/C/E to 23rd Street)**

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

For more information about how to get involved, please contact:
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Jessica Stern [sternj@hrw.org].