

# Big Meech Looks To Land Presidential Pardon, Pens Six-Page Jailhouse Letter To Russell Simmons For “Relief From Draconian Plea Deal”

*Edited By: Michele Fralick*

“For drug pushing, life sentence, no parole, no probation.” Those are the nine words belted out by then-New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller, more than 40-years ago. It’s a statement that led to America’s prison system norm, mandatory sentences of 15 years to life for drug dealers and addicts — even those caught with small amounts of drugs. In New York State, the law was most recently amended in 2009, but many of those locked up before the change, have long been behind bars.

First time non-violent offender Demetrius ‘Big Meech’ Flenory is still standing in the midst of Nelson Rockefeller’s wrath and the “Rockefeller drug laws” he birthed. “Most murderers, rapists and child molesters get much less time than non-violent drug offenders. The punishments don’t fit the crimes when it comes to these drug laws and sentences,” Big Meech pens to Russell Simmons, from behind bars. “Instead of giving me 30yrs I could have done a few years and some community service – talking to children and adults, detouring them from traveling down the same road I’ve traveled.” One person whose journey could be seen as strikingly familiar to Big Meech’s is John Forte. Both Forte and Flenory have had great influence on music, and both men were left to face lengthy prison sentences for their first time, non-violent crimes. But, just a few months after Big Meech was read his 30-year jail sentence, President George W. Bush granted Forte a pardon from his 14-year sentence – freeing the former Fugee after he served seven-years. “I wrote President Bush a seven-page thank-you letter,” Forte said. “But I don’t confuse benevolence with someone’s holistic policy.” The diligent efforts led by singer-songwriter Carly Simon, who was an advocate on Forte’s behalf – and previously fought for an appeal of the one time mandatory minimum drug laws that removed a New York judge’s discretion in a case – are what drew national attention to the former Fugee’s case. “Carly is a mentor to me, a guide, absolutely my spiritual godmother,” Forte said. “Against all odds, my case found its way onto the President’s desk and I was one of a chosen few to earn early release, and not a day goes by that I’m not grateful for that.”

Now, eight-years into his 30-year prison sentence, Big Meech is hoping for the same. Part of the 2009 New York State revision made sentencing retroactive, which allows more than 1000 imprisoned convicts to apply to a court to resentence and possibly release them. That’s why the one time Jay Z music associate is reaching out to Russell Simmons, hoping he – and other figures like him – will follow in Carly Simon’s footsteps. “Entertainers have used certain drug dealers or street people for street credibility,” Big Meech writes. “Without me naming names I can say that I have always made sure certain people were safe in many cities across America, so I believe most of these people should be the ones willing to help us campaign.”

In his letter to Russell Simmons, Big Meech explains how his impoverished childhood may have led the BMF Entertainment founder to make the decisions he wouldn’t make as a now 45-year-old man. “The needs and wants in my life are much more different than when I was 17-years-old, trying to become a man,” Big Meech writes. “My brother and I are “first time non-violent” offenders and our 30yr sentences are worse than some Columbian and Mexican cartel members.” Big Meech also chronicles some of his life behind bars, including how his decision to help an inmate who was being jumped landed him in “the hole,” and how being found with a cell phone led to his placement in a program which he writes, “I absolutely do not fit the criteria for because it’s for the “most violent and disruptive” inmates in the FBOP ...any other inmate that got caught with a cell phone just loses their privileges for a year and gets transferred to another prison, but they put me in this S.M.U. violent program?”

A detail Big Meech didn’t pen in his letter to Russell – the former Fulton County prosecutor Rand Csehy, who represented the state in his case, was charged with possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine and ecstasy and two counts of possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony, last year. As Csehy remains out on bail, offering legal services from a private practice, many

agree those are solid grounds for a mistrial of the Flenory cases. “We all make mistakes we have to pay for, but my sons too deserve a second chance,” The Flenory brothers’ mother explains. “They were not given this chance by having their lives taken away.”

If granted the pardon Forte was fortunate enough to land, Big Meech points to T.I. as an example of what he could contribute to society, highlighting the rapper-turned convicted drug felon’s “9 or 10 million dollars [T.I.] made the government before he did his first year in prison with his “countdown to lockdown” television show,” Big Meech penned. “If I was home to take advantage of all the legitimate opportunities that my fiancé and I have, I could do just as much, if not more.”

In seeming response to Nelson Rockefeller’s vow “to stop the pushing of drugs to protect the *innocent victim*,” Big Meech penned the following sentence: “*No one is forcing people to buy drugs.*”