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Innocence Project Statement on Two More DNA Exonerations in Virginia

'There can be no doubt that every other governor in the nation has an obligation to investigate how many other innocent people are in prison and could be exonerated if the state looked into their cases,' says Peter Neufeld

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(New York; December 14, 2005) - This afternoon, Virginia Governor Mark Warner announced that two men who were convicted and already served prison terms have been exonerated based on DNA evidence that was not available during their trials. Three other people - including Marvin Anderson, represented by the Innocence Project - have also been exonerated based on evidence retained by the same crime lab analyst in recent years in Virginia, and the Innocence Project consulted with Gov. Warner's office on the implementation of this initial review of cases.

Following is a statement from Peter Neufeld, Co-Director of the Innocence Project and the lead attorney on Anderson's case:

"This is a staggering and extraordinary development. In two of 31 randomly selected cases, people who were convicted of crimes and already served prison sentences have been exonerated. This rate of innocence - among people who never even asked for testing - should give pause to people who think mistakes in our criminal justice system are flukes.

"Today, we applaud Governor Mark Warner for being the nation's first governor to see the need for proactive DNA testing like this. We also applaud his leadership in ordering a full-scale review of hundreds of other cases in light of these exonerations.

"This should be a beacon to all of the other 49 governors across the country, who should be doing exactly what Virginia has done. Virginia's crime labs and justice system is no different than any other state's, and there can be no doubt that every other governor in the nation has an obligation to investigate how many other innocent people are in prison and could be exonerated if the state looked into their cases."

For more on Marvin Anderson's case, go here: [Marvin Anderson's case profile](#).

For the press release from Governor Warner's office, go to: [Governor Warner's Press Release](#).

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