

February 26, 2025

Good afternoon, Chairman Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

My name is Frank Gable. I was wrongfully convicted for the 1989 murder of Department of Corrections Director Michael Francke.

I did not kill Michael Francke and had nothing to do with his murder. I am completely innocent of this crime.

I was convicted because the witnesses at my trial testified falsely, and also because I was prevented from presenting critical information—evidence that another man had confessed, on multiple occasions, to killing Mr. Francke.

I was sentenced to life in prison without parole and I was wrongfully incarcerated for almost 30 years. But I knew I was an innocent man, and so I kept fighting. After I was convicted, my legal team was able to obtain numerous sworn statements from witnesses, including many of the State's star trial witnesses, admitting that they made false statements to incriminate me.

I presented this evidence to the District Court of Oregon and in 2019, the District Court observed that the recantations were credible. Additionally, the District Court also found credible the confession of the man who repeatedly admitted to murdering Mr. Francke. Taking all this evidence together, the Court concluded that I had made a sufficient showing of actual innocence and if the jury had heard this evidence, no reasonable jury would have found me guilty.

Refusing to accept this finding, the State appealed. And so my fight continued.

In 2022, the Ninth Circuit came to the same conclusion. It said the facts of my case were extraordinary and found that I had amassed compelling evidence of innocence that convincingly undermined the State's case. In the end, my conviction was vacated and the State was barred from rearresting, reindicting, or retrying me for Mr. Francke's murder.

After losing three decades of my life, I filed a petition for state compensation in November 2023 so that I might try to rebuild my life. I had hoped that the State would do the right thing and recognize my innocence, but it has not. My case is still pending, and I am still here fighting to prove my innocence.

In the time that I've spent fighting, I have lost almost my entire family. My parents died when I was in prison. My sister, brother, and brother-in-law have recently died. Almost none of my family members will be alive to see my name cleared.

When I was released, I was not given any support from the State. I am 66 years old. At the age when most people are thinking about retiring, I am still consumed with worry about making ends meet. I am unable to move forward because

I am still branded a murderer

I am still begging the State to acknowledge the truth

I am still trying to undo what was done to me

Continuing to exist in this nightmare is traumatizing, exhausting, and wearing.

I ask you to please use your power to fix this process. Please provide exonerees like me with justice and a clear path to move forward, recover, and heal.

Thank you,

Franke Gable