



NEWS RELEASE

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JOHN WILLIAM THOMPSON

Humboldt County Superior Court Judge Dale Reinholtsen denied John William Thompson's petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus on Tuesday April 20, 2010. Mr. Thompson had been convicted of Murder in 1989 of Verl "Grampa" Patton in an industrial area of Eureka near the waterfront.

Mr. Thompson challenged the conviction on multiple grounds, primarily arguing that the Government had coerced the testimony of Mr. Thompson's wife and step-daughter, through Keith Taylor, who at the time ran the Humboldt County Indian Justice Project, which was designed to help native Americans navigate through the Court system. Mr. Taylor testified and denied that he had ever coerced any testimony or that he was in fact an agent of the Government. The Court found that Mr. Taylor's testimony was "credible and believable and the testimony of Ms. Thompson and Ms. Barber (Mr. Thompson's wife and step-daughter) was not...and was influenced by a personal relationship with petitioner and a personal interest in how the matter is decided."

The Court also rejected Mr. Thompson's claim that his trial attorney was ineffective at Trial. Two days of extensive evidence gathering and witnesses were presented back in October of 2009. Mr. Thompson's Writ Petition had been pending in Humboldt County Court's since 2006.

The Prosecutor representing the people in the case was Allan L. Dollison. Public Defender Kevin Robinson represented Mr. Thompson. The result holds that Mr. Thompson's Murder conviction stands and he was ordered returned to Kern Valley State Prison to continue to serve his life sentence. Recently, Mr. Thompson stipulated to the waiver of a determination of his Parole Eligibility for one year.