

Seagram's Heiress Clare Bronfman Finally Secures Legal Victory After Months of Injustice and Mistreatment

Falsely labeled a sex offender by Bureau of Prisons, Bronfman's win upholds constitutional rights in cases that suggest dangerous departmental overreach

LOS ANGELES, CA, USA, November 23, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On November 16th, after months of court proceedings against the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and a series of cases that raise questions about government and prosecutorial overreach, Seagram's heiress Clare Bronfman successfully won the removal of a false "sex offender" label from her Case #No. 3:22CV838 file. Ms. Bronfman spent over two years in a higher security prison than her sentencing required after the BOP falsely labeled her a sex offender. Now, she and her attorneys have secured a noteworthy legal victory for the primacy of constitutional rights.

During court briefings, BOP lawyers argued that Ms. Bronfman had no standing to challenge their incorrect Pre-Sentencing Report (PSR) determination of "sex offender," despite the fact that she was never accused or convicted of such charges. If upheld, their argument would have established a precedent against court review of similar BOP decisions, even when errant. Instead, the presiding judge ruled that Ms. Bronfman's attorneys, Ronald Sullivan and Duncan Levin, "made a pretty convincing case that the BOP... applied this regulation wrongly."

Bronfman was falsely labeled by BOP, which unfairly associated her with child pornography charges against her co-defendant, NXIVM founder Keith Raniere. Bronfman, who was never accused of a sex offense, pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to conceal and harbor an alien for financial gain and one count of fraudulent use of identification after the judge declined to sever her trial. The mistaken labeling not only rendered her ineligible for good behavior credits under the First Step Act but also left her vulnerable to targeted harassment and violence from fellow inmates.

At time of sentencing, Ms. Bronfman's probation report falsely implied her knowledge of sex-related crimes, even though the judge indicated there was no evidence of such. After months of administrative appeals, Ms. Bronfman's attorneys, Ronald Sullivan and Duncan Levin, filed for a writ of habeas corpus, arguing that the false "sex offender" designation and its stigma violated her Constitutional rights. Prior to the ruling, BOP informed Ms. Bronfman's attorneys of their plans to remove the sex offender designation from her file. As a result, the court remained unable to rule on BOP's argument of "complete discretion" regarding the sex offender label.

Ms. Bronfman's attorneys have also separately argued in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit that her 81-month sentence – nearly three times the recommended limit for such crimes – was handed down in error, claiming, among other things, that the court punished Ms. Bronfman after listening to nine hours of victim impact testimony, most of which did not involve the two crimes to which she pled guilty. Since then, multiple forensic experts have concluded that the alleged child pornography evidence was fabricated and planted, bringing both the charge – and the FBI's credibility – into question. Based on these findings, Raniere is challenging his conviction with a claim of government misconduct.

"Clare Bronfman was wrongfully labeled by the government as a sex offender without any supporting evidence and contrary to the court's finding. This should not have taken a federal lawsuit to resolve. She will now be able to move to a minimum security facility and qualify for early release, but most importantly, she will no longer carry the stigma of that classification," Duncan Levin said.

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