

'Good Doctor' actor Hill Harper backs ex-prisoner's move to overturn conviction

By Graham Rayman | February 8, 2019



Hill Harper (left), an actor in "The Good Doctor," is pictured with John Ramsey at a press conference Friday in Brooklyn. Ramsey served 33 years in prison for a murder he says he didn't commit. (Jesse Ward for New York Daily News)

An actor known for his roles on "CSI-NY" and "The Good Doctor" threw his support Friday behind a man who spent 33 years in prison for a murder he says he didn't commit

and is trying to overturn his conviction in the face of new evidence.

Hill Harper, 52, appeared at a press conference for Brooklyn native John Ramsey, who has filed a motion to overturn his conviction in the 1981 murder of Vernon Green in Flatbush. He was paroled in 2015.

"I stand up here with a heavy heart because this press conference shouldn't be happening," Harper said. "It shouldn't be happening because John Ramsey shouldn't have spent 33 years in prison and speaking specifically to Mr. Ramsey, when I was 21 years old, I was accepted to Harvard Law School. When he was 21 years old, he went to prison."

Harper, a Harvard Law graduate and bestselling author, noted that Ramsey's repeated document requests yielded a previously unknown arrest report that showed two other men fitting the description of the suspects had been arrested within an hour of the crime near where it happened.

The Daily News reported Friday that Harper would file the motion based on the new document.



John Ramsey served 33 years in prison for a murder he says he didn't commit. (Jesse Ward for New York Daily News)

That arrest report was never turned over to Ramsey's original defense lawyer, Michael Vecchione, who believes the documents would have altered the course of the case.

"The work that we've heard that Mr. Ramsey did on his own case is better work than any Harvard Law School graduate would ever do," Harper said. "John Ramsey should be a superstar attorney because he was able to do better research more research to comb through every document to prove his innocence."

Harper befriended Barack Obama at Harvard, before entering the theater and starring in numerous TV shows and movies. He has been outspoken on prison issues, writing the book, "Letters to an Incarcerated Brother," a sort of open letter to black men in prison.

Harper quoted Martin Luther King Jr. as saying, "'We are all tied together in a single garment of mutual destiny.' "That means that whether or not my TV show is No. 1, we're all connected," he said. "We need to recognize the connective tissue to Mr. Ramsey's case."

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