

Hill Harper speaks out in support of John Ramsey, who claims wrongful imprisonment for '81 murder

By **Melanie Eversley** - February 9, 2019



Hill Harper speaks onstage during Global Citizen Week: At What Cost? at The Apollo Theater on September 23, 2018 in New York City. (Photo by Noam Galai/Getty Images for Global Citizen)

Actor **Hill Harper** of TV's *The Good Doctor* and *How It Really Happened* is putting his support behind **John Ramsey**, a Black man who spent 33 years in prison for a **murder** he says he did not commit, the *New York Daily News* is reporting.

Harper, 52, now lives in Detroit, but appeared Friday at a press conference in Brooklyn, N.Y., amid the surfacing of new evidence to speak out for Ramsey, who was paroled in 2015 but has always maintained he did not murder **Vernon Green** in Brooklyn's Flatbush neighborhood in 1981, the *Daily News* reported.

Harper told reporters that one of the many tragic parts of Ramsey's story is the comparison between his own life and the former convict's.

—Hill Harper to speak out against mass incarceration in new book—

"I stand up here with a heavy heart because this press conference shouldn't be happening," the news organization quoted the actor and activist as saying. "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."

At the center of the case is the fact that authorities repeatedly ignored Ramsey's requests for a report detailing the arrests of two men who fit the description of the suspects near the crime scene and within an hour of where it took place, the *News* reported.

Ramsey, who served 33 years in prison for the crime, will file a motion based on that recently discovered document, the news organization reported.

--Hill Harper discusses a new book, 'Letters to an Incarcerated Brother'--

"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 told reporters. "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."

Among other causes, Harper has long been an advocate for the rights of incarcerated people and has been involved in empowering people behind bars. When **Barack Obama**, Harper's buddy from Harvard Law School, was running for president the first time around, Harper took time off from acting to campaign for the man who would become the first Black president.
