



# State of North Carolina

**Roy Cooper**  
GOVERNOR

PARDON OF INNOCENCE  
for  
KENNETH MANZI KAGONYERA

WHEREAS, during the December 2001 Term of Buncombe County Superior Court, Kenneth Manzi Kagonyera ("Kagonyera"), pled guilty to Second-Degree Murder, Docket Number 00-CRS-065086; and

WHEREAS, on September 10, 2002, by judgment of said Court, Kagonyera was sentenced to a minimum term of one hundred forty-four (144) months and a maximum term of one hundred eighty-two (182) months in the custody of the then-North Carolina Department of Corrections; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, after numerous attempts at obtaining post-conviction relief, Kagonyera filed a claim with the North Carolina Innocence Inquiry Commission ("NCIIC"); and

WHEREAS, on April 28 - 29, 2011, an eight-member panel of the NCIIC heard Kagonyera's case and unanimously concluded that there was sufficient evidence of factual innocence to merit judicial review and requested a review by a three-judge panel appointed by the North Carolina Supreme Court ("panel"), pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 15A-1469(a); and

WHEREAS, on September 12 - 21, 2011 the panel convened in the Buncombe County Superior Court to hear evidence supporting Kagonyera's claim of innocence; and

WHEREAS, on September 22, 2011, the panel, following the guidelines established in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 15A-1469, unanimously agreed that Kagonyera had proved by clear and convincing evidence that he is factually innocent of the murder of Walter Bowman on September 18, 2000; and

WHEREAS, Kagonyera now seeks a Pardon of Innocence from the Governor; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of North Carolina is vested with the exclusive authority under the state constitution to issue pardons to individuals upon such conditions as he may think proper.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Roy Cooper, Governor of the State of North Carolina, in consideration of the above factors, and by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution of the State, do by these presents PARDON the said KENNETH MANZI KAGONYERA, it being a Pardon of Innocence.

This Order effective this the 17<sup>th</sup> day of December 2020.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roy Cooper".

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Roy Cooper  
Governor