Monday, December 21, 2020

Dear XXXXXXXX,

Did you know that nearly all DNA-based exonerations in Missouri have involved an eyewitness misidentification? Eyewitness misidentification played a role in approximately 71 percent of convictions nationwide that have been overturned through DNA testing, making it the leading cause of wrongful conviction in these cases. From problems with lighting at the time of the crime, to the use of a weapon which takes away a witness’s ability to focus on facial features, to cross-racial identification and misleading lineups—a lot that can go wrong with eyewitness identification.

States and law enforcement agencies in our region are starting to recognize the risks inherent in eyewitness cases and some best practices have been adopted by Missouri’s neighboring states. Despite this progress, there are still agencies across the country that have not yet adopted necessary reforms. As a believer in justice and fairness within our legal system I support and encourage implementing reformed eyewitness identification policies to prevent future wrongful convictions.

Sincerely,