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# Hughes Hubbard & Reed

## Firm Wins Early Release for Federal Inmate Serving Life Term

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**April 7, 2020** — Hughes Hubbard won the release of a pro bono client who served more than 26 years in prison after being convicted of a drug offense.

On Jan. 29, U.S. District Judge Loretta Preska ordered that John Bowman be resentenced to time served plus two weeks on the grounds that his lengthy incarceration was sufficient to provide general and specific deterrence. Bowman was released from prison on Feb. 10.

In December 1992, a jury convicted Bowman of conspiracy to distribute more than 26 kilograms of crack cocaine. He was subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment and 10 years of supervised release, a ruling that was affirmed by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in December 1994.

In 2010, Congress passed the Fair Sentencing Act, a major sentencing reform that significantly reduced the statutory penalties for crack cocaine offenses and increased the drug weight required to trigger a mandatory minimum sentence. These reduced penalties, however, were not made retroactive.

The First Step Act, which came into effect in early 2019, grants judges the authority to impose reduced sentences on any person sentenced prior to the Fair Sentencing Act.

In May 2019, Bowman was referred to HHR by the Federal Defenders of New York -- an independent nonprofit dedicated to defending poor people accused of federal crimes. The firm submitted a petition on behalf of Bowman, arguing he was eligible to be resentenced to time served under the First Step Act in light of the significant sentence he had already served as well as his post-conviction conduct.

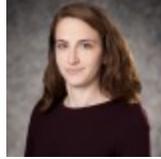
Judge Preska accepted HHR's argument, noting that an additional period of imprisonment was not required to protect the public from other crimes by Bowman. "The Court notes that Mr. Bowman's family fully supports him and also notes the willingness of his sisters to permit him to reside with them," the judge wrote in her decision.

Marc Weinstein and Valerie Cahan represented Bowman in this matter.

## **Related People**



**Marc A. Weinstein**



**Valerie Cahan**