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**MAY 2, 2018**

## **Baltimore City Agrees to Pay \$9 Million for Wrongful Conviction and 21-Year Incarceration**

Today, the Baltimore City Board of Estimates approved a settlement in which Baltimore will pay \$9 million to James Owens, a man wrongfully convicted of the 1987 murder of a young woman in Southeast Baltimore. Mr. Owens was sentenced to life in prison without parole and spent 21 years in prison for a crime he did not commit. The settlement reached today is reported to be the largest ever in Maryland for allegations of police misconduct.

A team of lawyers at Brown, Goldstein & Levy and Levin & Curlett represented Mr. Owens in a lawsuit filed in the federal district court of Maryland alleging that Baltimore Police Department homicide detectives who investigated the murder failed to disclose exculpatory evidence to Mr. Owens' criminal defense attorney.

Mr. Owens was exonerated by DNA evidence and released from prison in 2008. Today's settlement brings to a close a long and painful chapter in Mr. Owens' life. Mr. Owens commented that, "no amount of money can give me back the time that I lost."

"The American system of justice only works when police reveal all the evidence, even evidence that contradicts their belief regarding who committed a crime," said Mr. Owens' co-counsel, Andrew D. Freeman. "This settlement should remind all law enforcement officers of the consequences of failing to turn over exculpatory information." Co-counsel Charles N. Curlett, Jr. added, "When such misconduct has occurred, prosecutors must then honor their duty to purge the erroneous conviction and provide speedy justice for the wrongly accused."

**For more information, media are invited to attend a press conference** at Brown, Goldstein & Levy, LLP, 120 East Baltimore Street, Suite 1700, Baltimore, MD 21202 on Wednesday, May 2, 2018, at 12:00 noon.

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