

MindFreedom International

NEWS RELEASE - *immediate release*

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On Friday, 1 May 2009:

Protest to Be Held in Minnesota State Capitol Rotunda to Stop Forced Electroshock of Minnesota Resident.

MindFreedom International announced that it will peacefully protest the ongoing forced electroshock of Ray Sandford, a 55-year-old resident of Columbia Heights, Minnesota. The protest will take place inside the Rotunda of the Minnesota State Capitol building in St. Paul, Minnesota on Friday, 1 May 2009, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. **A NEWS CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD AT 11 am.**

A six-month campaign to stop Sandford's electroshocks has gained international attention. Sandford has been shocked more than 40 times on an outpatient basis under a court order even though he and his family have clearly stated his desire not to be shocked. Sandford lives in a residential group home and is under the general guardianship of Lutheran Social Services.

"It's amazing that a man who is supposedly being protected by Minnesota court-appointed guardians and who has been represented in court hearings by a Minnesota public defender is suffering this kind of human rights violation," said Al Galves, PhD, a member of the MindFreedom board of directors.

Friday's protest will feature a number of speakers including David Oaks, Executive Director of MindFreedom from Oregon; Al Galves, a retired psychologist from New Mexico; Louisa Bouta, a long-time activist for psychiatric rights in Minnesota; David Culver, a disability advocate; and Daryl Trones, a mental health advocate.

Galves said that electroshock -- also known as electroconvulsive therapy or ECT -- subjects the patient to as much as 600 volts of electricity for between one-half and four seconds. "It disables the brain," Galves said.

MindFreedom International is an independent nonprofit coalition of psychiatric survivors and others who advocate for the increased availability of safe, humane and effective care for people who are experiencing psychiatric emergencies and who oppose involuntary treatment. MindFreedom can be contacted at office@mindfreedom.org.

For more info on the Ray Campaign see: www.mindfreedom.org/ray.

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