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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attorney General Jennifer M. Granholm commented today on U. S. District Court Judge Richard A. Enslen's February 3, 1999, order terminating one of Michigan's longest running prison litigation cases, *U.S.A. v Michigan*.

In 1984, the U. S. Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against Michigan over alleged improper conditions at five prisons: State Prison of Southern Michigan Central Complex, State Prison of Southern Michigan Trusty (now known as Parnall Correctional Facility), Charles Egeler Facility, Marquette Branch Prison and Michigan Reformatory. During the course of the case, numerous improvements were implemented at the prisons.

Judge Enslen's decision came as a result of a joint motion filed by the Department of Justice and Michigan. Both parties agreed that no constitutional violations now exist at these facilities.

Judge Enslen's order said, in part:

Over the years, the enforcement of the Decree has resulted in some significant progress in the conditions of Michigan prisons. This Court has previously terminated the mental health portion of the Consent Decree and on many occasions has noted progress in the various areas covered by the Decree. The Motion and its attached exhibits make the claim that there are no current and ongoing constitutional violations in the areas of prisoner classification, protection from harm, fire safety, sanitation and medical care. The Motion supports this claim by the affidavits of various state experts detailing progress under the Decree. Their affidavits do not indicate that all serious problems in each of these areas have been solved, but they are sufficient to support a conclusion that insofar as these litigants are concerned ongoing constitutional violations do not exist.

Granholm said: "One of the costliest prison cases in Michigan's history is finally over. We are hopefully nearing the end of an era of federal intervention in Michigan's prisons."

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