

URGENT ACTION

OHIO GOVERNOR COMMUTES DEATH SENTENCE

On 26 March the Governor of Ohio granted clemency to William Montgomery, who was scheduled to be executed on 11 April. The governor has commuted the death sentence to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

In a statement issued on 26 March, Governor John Kasich commuted the death sentence of **William Montgomery** who was sentenced to death in 1986 for the murder of Debra Ogle earlier that year. William Montgomery had consistently maintained his innocence.

The Ohio parole board had voted six to four to recommend that Governor Kasich commute the death sentence to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. In its clemency report issued on 16 March, the six in the majority gave as their reasons for voting in favour of clemency concern that had been raised by former jurors about their decision making process at the trial, and doubts that had been raised about whether another juror had been competent to sit as a juror. This, coupled with the prosecution's failure to disclose a police report which had pointed to friends of Debra Ogle saying they had seen her alive four days after the state argued that William Montgomery had killed her, the majority said, raised "a substantial question as to whether Montgomery's death sentence was imposed through the kind of just and credible process that a punishment of this magnitude requires".

In his statement, Governor Kasich noted the parole board's recommendation, and said that "after consideration of all relevant factors" he had concluded that commutation of the death sentence was warranted. He directed that the death sentence be commuted to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

No further action by the UA Network is requested. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the second update of UA 47/18. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/8099/2018/en/>

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