

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

May 24, 2010

The Honorable Ted Strickland
Governor of Ohio
Riffe Center
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43266-0601

Dear Governor Strickland:

On behalf of the Catholic Bishops of Ohio, I urge you to provide clemency to Mr. Richard Nields who is scheduled for execution on June 10, 2010. We affirm the Ohio Parole Board's majority recommendation to commute his sentence to life without parole. We pray that you will reach the same conclusion.

As you are aware, the Catholic Church believes that the death penalty is an unnecessary and systemically flawed form of punishment. The Catholic Bishops of Ohio consistently have advocated for an end to the death penalty. Viable and just alternatives, such as life imprisonment, are effectively used in other states and other countries.

We offer our prayers and condolences to all victims of violent and senseless crimes, especially the family and friends of Patricia Newsome. We pray for Mr. Nields and his family and friends. We continue to pray for you and all who must participate in our state executions.

May God grant you wisdom and courage. We look forward to the day when the death penalty is only remembered as part of Ohio's history.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a cross symbol and reading "Dennis M. Schnurr".

Most Reverend Dennis M. Schnurr
Archbishop of Cincinnati