

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

August 28, 2009

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 commute the death sentence of Romell Broom to life without parole. He is scheduled for execution on September 15, 2009.

Last month, we were deeply disappointed that you did not follow the recommendation of your parole board and commute the sentence of Mr. Jason Getsy. We encourage you to reconsider your views on the death penalty and take steps to eliminate this 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 repeat our call for the establishment of a non-partisan study commission that would provide an objective review of Ohio's death penalty system. This would be a helpful first step in addressing this difficult issue.

We offer our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of Tryna Middleton, as well as all victims of violent and senseless crimes. We pray for Mr. Broom, his family and friends. We continue to pray for you and all who must participate in our state executions.

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

Respectfully,

Most Reverend Daniel E. Pilarczyk
Archbishop of Cincinnati