

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

September 21, 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 again urge you to provide clemency to Mr. Romell Broom whose execution has been rescheduled for September 28, 2009. Your reprieve in this situation was warranted and appreciated. We encourage you, however, to change this decree to a life without parole sentence.

In a similar context, we ask you to commute the sentence of Mr. Lawrence Reynolds who is scheduled for execution on October 8, 2009. 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. In light of yet another procedurally flawed execution, 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.

We offer our prayers and condolences to all victims of violent and senseless crimes, especially the family and friends of Tryna Middleton, and Loretta Mae Foster. We pray for Mr. Broom, Mr. Reynolds, and their 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