

# THE CONSTITUTION PROJECT



*Safeguarding Liberty, Justice & the Rule of Law*

## The Constitution Project's Clearinghouse of New Voices for Criminal Justice Reform

### STATEMENT FROM CORRECTIONS OFFICIALS REGARDING THE EXECUTION OF CLAYTON LOCKETT

As former correctional officials, we are deeply troubled by the botched execution of Clayton Lockett in Oklahoma last night. Our jobs as officers of the law involved carrying out and enforcing punishment within the confines of state and federal law. What appears to have been a horrific death last night certainly does not seem to have been legal or humane.

Some of the media who witnessed part of the execution appeared to be visibly shaken and disturbed. But the staff whose job it was to administer these drugs and to handle Mr. Lockett's body were surely put through an even more difficult experience. A career in corrections prepares one to see many things, but the terrible memories of witnessing executions remain in one's psyche forever. Correctional officers should not have to prepare to witness the horror of a botched execution such as that endured by Mr. Lockett and we can only imagine the emotional toll of this event on the professionals involved in the procedure.

No individual should be asked to carry out an execution using experimental drugs and dosages or without proper training and medical expertise. We cannot know how last night's events happened without a full independent inquiry, not by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections itself, but by a credible third party whose findings should be made public. And no further executions should be carried out in Oklahoma until Mr. Lockett's death is fully investigated and all the facts are known.

Signatories:

**Dr. Allen Ault**

Former Commissioner, Georgia, Mississippi, Colorado Departments of Corrections.

**Robert Brown, Jr.**

Director, Michigan Department of Corrections (1961-1991).

**Jane Browning**

Executive Director, Compassion Works for All; Former Executive Director, International Community Corrections Association

**Paddy Burwell**

Director (Public Member), State Bar of Texas (1997-2000); Member, Legal Services to the Poor and Criminal Matters Committee, State Bar of Texas (2002-2011), Committee Chair (2010); Member, State Bar of Texas Commission for Lawyer Discipline (2002-2005); Member, Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles (1999-2005); Life Member, Association of Former Texas Rangers.

**Terry J. Collins**

Director, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (2006-2010); Assistant Director, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (1977-2006). Correctional consultant utilizing 36 years of

correctional experience.

**Kathy Dennehy**

Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Corrections (2004-2007).

**Steve J. Martin**

Corrections Consultant and Attorney; Special Assistant Attorney General, Texas Attorney General (1985-1986); Executive Assistant to the Director (1984-1985), General Counsel (1983-1985), and Legal Counsel (1981-1983), Texas Department of Corrections, Huntsville, Texas; Federal court monitor, remedial decrees involving staff use of force in prisons and jails in the U.S., (1994-present); Expert, U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division (1993-2008); Expert, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (2010-present).

**Dennis O'Neill**

Retired Warden, Florida State Prison.

**Rev. Dr. Carroll L. Pickett**

Chaplain, Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville, Texas Department of Corrections (1980-1995).

**Chase Riveland**

Director, Washington Departments of Corrections (12 years); Director, Colorado Department of Corrections (4 years).

**Charles Terrell**

Chairman, Texas Department of Criminal Justice (1987-1990); Chairman, Safer Dallas Better Dallas (2006-2012).

**Dr. Reginald Wilkinson**

Director (Ret.), Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC), 1991-2006; DRC employee, 1973; President, American Correctional Association; Vice Chair for North America, International Corrections and Prison Association; President, Ohio Correctional and Court Services Association; Founder, Ohio chapter, National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice.

**Jeanne Woodford**

Former Warden, San Quentin State Prison, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.