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CLEVELAND MAN EXONERATED FROM OHIO DEATH ROW

Joe D'Ambrosio becomes 140th Death Row Exoneration and the Sixth from Ohio

Attorneys for former death row prisoner Joe D'Ambrosio confirm that the case against their client is resolved and D'Ambrosio is the sixth man exonerated from Ohio's death row. John Q. Lewis of Tucker Ellis & West LLP and David Mills of the Mills Law Office LLC said the United States Supreme Court denied the petition made by the Ohio Attorney General to review an August 2011 ruling by the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. The highest court in the nation had the final say as to whether or not D'Ambrosio could be re-prosecuted.

Joe D'Ambrosio was wrongfully convicted of the 1989 murder of Anthony Klann in Cleveland. Cuyahoga County prosecutors withheld 10 pieces of evidence that would have exonerated D'Ambrosio at his trial and implicated another suspect in the crime.

"Today was 23 years in the making," D'Ambrosio says. "I want to thank my attorneys John Q. Lewis and David Mills, my family and friends who stood by me to make this day possible. Justice has finally prevailed."

Ohioans to Stop Executions is now calling on Governor Kasich to issue an immediate moratorium on executions. Mr. D'Ambrosio's exoneration and the ongoing review of the death penalty system by the Ohio Supreme Court provide Governor Kasich with ample reasoning to issue a moratorium on executions until the conclusion of the review by the State's highest court.

Kevin Werner, Executive Director of Ohioans to Stop Executions, says, "This case exemplifies one of the most serious flaws of our death penalty system—the dangerous risk Ohio runs of executing someone for a crime he didn't commit. Joe D'Ambrosio is exonerated today by sheer coincidence. It was a coincidence that Joe met Rev. Neil Kookoothe, who is trained as a lawyer and critical care nurse, and that Rev. Kookoothe was willing to look closely at this case. Coincidence is not the standard we should be comfortable with when our justice system is seeking to execute people."

Ohioans to Stop Executions (OTSE) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that brings together faith and community leaders, activists, attorneys, death row exonerees and murder victims' families under a common cause: abolishing the death penalty in Ohio. OTSE is the state affiliate of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty.

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