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# DEATH PENALTY INFORMATION CENTER

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## LOUISIANA INMATE EXONERATED AND FREED FROM DEATH ROW AFTER 30 YEARS

### *Glenn Ford is 144th Death Row Inmate to be Cleared of All Charges Since 1973, and the 10<sup>th</sup> in Louisiana*

Washington D.C. – Late on Tuesday afternoon of March 11, 2014, Glenn Ford was freed from the death row at Angola Prison after Judge Ramona Emanuel ordered him to be “unconditionally released.” Ford spent 30 years on Louisiana's death row for a murder and robbery that now appears to have been committed by another man. Ford was exonerated after prosecutors filed a motion to vacate his conviction and sentence, saying they recently received “credible evidence” that Ford “was neither present at, nor a participant in, the robbery and murder” of which he was convicted in 1984.

“This case painfully reveals the fallibility of the death penalty and the risks we take with every death sentence,” said Richard Dieter, Executive Director of the Death Penalty Information Center. “Some states are trying to speed up executions instead of addressing the underlying problems that have led to such mistakes. When 144 people like Glenn Ford are wrongly slated for execution, the whole system should be suspect.”

Ford was convicted at a trial that was fraught with error. As an African-American, he was tried and sentenced to death by an all-white jury. One of the witnesses against him at trial admitted that police had helped her make up her story. A state “expert” who testified about the victim's time of death had not even examined the victim's body. Ford's lead trial attorney had never tried a case before a jury. A second attorney, two years out of law school, handled insurance claims and was even less experienced. They failed to hire any experts to rebut the prosecution's case because they believed they would have to pay for the experts themselves. The Louisiana Supreme Court earlier said it had “serious questions” about the outcome of the trial, but did not reverse Ford's conviction, leaving him on death row.

Glenn Ford is the 144<sup>th</sup> person since 1973 to be exonerated and freed after having been sentenced to death. He spent more time on death row than any of the other exonerees. Ford is the 10<sup>th</sup> death row inmate to be cleared of charges in Louisiana, making that

state one of five in the country with 10 or more exonerations.

In order to be included on [DPIC's Innocence List](#), defendants must have been convicted, sentenced to death, and subsequently either (a) acquitted of all charges related to the crime that placed them on death row, (b) had all charges related to the crime dismissed by the prosecution, or (c) granted a complete pardon based on evidence of innocence. Ford became a suspect in the murder because he sold some jewelry received from one of the original co-defendants in the crime that might have come from the victim's store.

To speak with Richard Dieter, Executive Director of the Death Penalty Information Center, please contact DPIC at 202-289-4022 or <[dpic@deathpenaltyinfo.org](mailto:dpic@deathpenaltyinfo.org)>.

For more information on Glenn Ford's case, contact Gary Clements <[GClements@cpcpl.org](mailto:GClements@cpcpl.org)> or Aaron Novod <[DNovod@cpcpl.org](mailto:DNovod@cpcpl.org)> both of the Capital Post Conviction Project of Louisiana, 504-212-2110.

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*The Death Penalty Information Center ([www.deathpenaltyinfo.org](http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org)) is a non-profit organization serving the media and the public with analysis and information on issues concerning capital punishment. DPIC was founded in 1990 and prepares in-depth reports, issues press releases, conducts briefings for the media, and serves as a resource to those working on this issue.*