

July 11, 2003

The Honorable Michael F. Easley
The Honorable James B. Black
The Honorable Richard T. Morgan

Dear Sirs:

We write to urge your support for a two-year suspension of executions in our State during which time the General Assembly will be able to study our system of capital punishment.

The undersigned are a diverse and bipartisan group of North Carolina citizens. Some of us believe the death penalty is used too sparingly, while others believe it should not be used at all. We all believe, though, that legitimate concerns about the fairness and accuracy of our system of capital punishment exist and must be addressed. We are even more convinced of this fact in light of the several recent cases in which sentences of death have been overturned by our state courts.

We are confident that after careful review, our legislature can identify and enact reforms that will ensure the fairness of the system and, most critically, guarantee no innocent person is wrongfully convicted or executed.

We are proud to be citizens of this great state and support its historical and demonstrated commitment to justice. We believe this is an issue of such importance that it rises above politics and calls upon us all to stand tall for justice and North Carolina. Your support of Senate Bill 972 will do just this.

Thank you sincerely for your time and consideration of this most significant issue.

Very truly yours,

Honorable Steve Allen, former N.C. Superior Court Judge, Board Member, N.C. Commission on Indigent Defense Services

Melvin "Skip" Alston, President, N.C. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Honorable Jerry S. Alvis Sr., former N.C. Superior Court Judge, National Board Director, American Board of Trial Advocates

Franklin P. Anderson, Trustee, N.C. Central University and former Chief Executive Officer, Custom Molders

L.M. Baker, Jr., former Chairman of the Board, Wachovia Corporation, former Chair, N.C. Citizens for Business and Industry (NCCBI)

Affiliations are listed for identification purposes only.

Garland B. Baker, former N.C. Assistant District Attorney

Frank W. Ballance, Jr., U.S. Representative, N.C. 1st District and former N.C. Senate President Pro Tempore

Katharine T. Bartlett, Dean and A. Kenneth Pye Professor of Law, Duke University

Charles L. Becton, former Associate Judge, N.C. Court of Appeals, former President, N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers

Harold J. Bender, former Assistant United States Attorney, N.C. Western District

Honorable Walter H. Bennett, Jr., former N.C. District Court Judge

Doris Betts, Author, former Professor of English, UNC-Chapel Hill, and winner of 1994 Southern Book Critics Circle Award

Paul L. Bidwell, former N.C. Assistant District Attorney

Bishop Leonard Bolick, N.C. Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Salisbury, N.C.

Rhoda B. Billings, former Chief Justice, N.C. Supreme Court, Professor of Law at Wake Forest University, Board Member, N.C. Commission on Indigent Defense Services Commission

Janet Ward Black, President, N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers, former Miss North Carolina

William L. Bondurant, former Executive Director, Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, former N.C. Secretary of Administration

Honorable Robert B. Browning, former Associate Justice, N.C. Supreme Court

Sally Buckner, Poet and Editor of *Word and Witness: 100 Years of North Carolina Poetry*

Leah M. Broker, President, Board of Western Carolinians For Criminal Justice, past President, N.C. Association of Women Attorneys

Kenneth S. Broun, Professor of Law and former Dean, UNC-Chapel Hill, and former Mayor, Town of Chapel Hill

Robert J. Brown, Chairman, B&C Associates, Member, Board of Directors, Wachovia Corporation, former Special Assistant to President Richard M. Nixon

Wade E. Byrd, former President, N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers

Stephen W. Camp, Southern Conference, United Church of Christ

Jennifer Thompson Cannino, N.C. Victim of Violent Crime

Alfred P. Carlton, Jr., President, American Bar Association

Honorable J. Phil Carlton, former Associate Justice, N.C. Supreme Court and former Secretary, N.C. Department of Crime Control and Public Safety

Julius L. Chambers, Director, Civil Rights Center, UNC-Chapel Hill, former Chancellor, N.C. Central University, former Director-Counsel, Legal Defense Fund of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Donna Chavis, Executive Director, Native Americans in Philanthropy

Joseph B. Cheshire, V, Chair, N.C. Commission on Indigent Defense Services

Dave Cloutier, Retired N.C. State Bureau of Investigation Agent and former Trainer, N.C. Justice Academy

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Honorable Janice McKenzie Cole, former U.S. Attorney, N.C. Eastern District, former N.C. District Court Judge, former Police Officer

Carolyn Q. Coleman, Commissioner, Guilford County Board of Commissioners

Charisse Coleman, Writer and Sister of Murder Victim

Janet Cowell, Raleigh City Council Member

Burton Craige, former President, N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers, Member, Board of Directors, Legal Aid of N.C.

Hal Crowther, Journalist and 1992 Winner of the H.L. Mencken Writing Award

Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry, Bishop Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina

Rt. Rev. Clifton Daniel, 3rd, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina

Gregory Davis, President, N.C. Association of Black Lawyers

Charles Edward Daye, Professor of Law, UNC-Chapel Hill, former Dean, N.C. Central University Law School, and Executive Secretary, N.C. Association of Black Lawyers, 1979-99

Walter E. Dellinger, III, Professor of Law, Duke University and former Acting Solicitor General of the United States

Rabbi Lucy H. F. Dinner, Raleigh Temple Beth Or

Alfred Dixon, Mayor, Greenevers, N.C., President, N.C. Association of Black Mayors, President, Multi-State Contracting Corporation

Ariel Dorfman, Walter Hines Page Research Professor of Literature and Latin American Studies, Duke University

Martin Eakes, Executive Director, Self-Help Credit Union

Clyde Edgerton, Author and 1997 Winner of N.C. Award for Literature

Bishop Marion M. Edwards, North Carolina Conference, United Methodist Church

Honorable James G. Exum, Jr., former Chief Justice, Supreme Court of North Carolina

James E. Ferguson, II, former President, N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers

Tom W. Fewel, Father of Murder Victim

William C. Friday, President Emeritus, University of North Carolina System

Honorable Henry E. Frye, former Chief Justice, N.C. Supreme Court and former N.C. State Senator and Representative, former Assistant U.S. Attorney, N.C. Middle District

Honorable James C. Fuller, Jr., former Associate Judge, N.C. Court of Appeals, former President of N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers

Robert Galbraith, General Director, Opera Company of N.C.

Johnny S. Gaskins, former State Bureau of Investigation Agent

J. Gary Gloster, Bishop Suffragan, Diocese of North Carolina

James F. Goodmon, President and Chief Executive Officer, Capitol Broadcasting Company

Bishop F. Joseph Gossman, Roman Catholic Diocese of Raleigh

Allan Gurganus, Author and former American Academy of Arts and Sciences Fellow

Bill Guthridge, Coach Emeritus, UNC-Chapel Hill Men's Basketball Team

Honorable Lawrence T. Hammond, Jr., N.C. Emergency District Court Judge, former N.C. Chief District Court Judge

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R. Darrell Hancock, former N.C. Associate Attorney General and Z. Smith Reynolds Board Member

Paul Hardin, Professor of Law and former Chancellor, UNC-Chapel Hill

Andrea Harris, President, Institute for Minority Economic Development

Stanley Hauerwas, Gilbert T. Rowe Professor of Theological Ethics, Duke University Divinity School

Arvid S. Herje, former Police Chief, Town of Carrboro

John Herrera, Alderman, Town of Carrboro and Board President, Latino Community Credit Union

Keith A. Holliday, Mayor of Greensboro, N.C., Vice President, First Citizens Bank

Bertha Holt, former N.C. State Representative

Larnie Horton, Chief Executive Officer, Horton and Horton Enterprises and former Trustee, UNC Board of Governors

Marjorie Hudson, Writer and Member, 2003 N.C. Humanities Council Forum

Marshall Hurley, former Republican Party legal counsel for N.C. Senate, former Chief of Staff to U.S. Representative Howard Coble

Carolyn Hutchison, Police Chief, Town of Carrboro

Robert Inman, Novelist, Screenwriter and Playwright, Member of N.C. Writers Network

Rt. Rev. Robert H. Johnson, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina

Frankie T. Jones, Sr., President, B&C Associates

Robert Jordan, President, Jordan Lumber; former Lieutenant Governor; former Chair, N.C. Economic Development Board

Elizabeth Kiss, Director, Kenan Institute for Ethics, Associate Professor of Political Science and Philosophy

Richard Krawiec, Novelist and former Fellow, N.C. Arts Council

Thomas W. Lambeth, former Executive Director, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

Rev. Mac Legerton, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Center for Community Action

Michael Malone, Author and winner of 1980 O. Henry Award, 1984 Emmy Award, and 1007 Edgar Award

Margaret Maron, Author and Founding Member, Carolina Crime Writers Association, 1988-98

Elaine Marshall, N.C. Secretary of State and former N.C. State Senator

Honorable Harry Martin, former Associate Justice, Supreme Court of North Carolina

William F.W. Massengale, former N.C. Assistant District Attorney

James B. Maxwell, former President N.C. Bar Association

James H. Maynard, Chairman of the Board, Investors Management Corporation and Chairman, Golden Corral, member of Board of Directors, Branch Banking and Trust Company (BB&T)

Friar David McBriar, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

Garry McCants, President, N.C. Black Chamber of Commerce and President, Black Pages USA

Kathryn C. McCoy, Mother of Murder Victim

Howard C. McGlohon, former N.C. Assistant District Attorney

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Michael C. Miller, President and Chief Executive Officer, First National Bank and Trust Company of N.C.
William S. Mills, former President, N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers
James Moeser, Chancellor, UNC-Chapel Hill
Richard “Skip” Moore, President, Weaver Foundation
Mary Mountcastle, President, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation
Lewis H. Myers, President, LHM Associates and Chair, Economic Development Committee, N.C. Citizens for Business and Industry (NCCBI)
Stephen Lybrook Neal, former U.S. Representative, N.C. 5th District
Roy D. Neill, former N.C. Assistant District Attorney
Gene R. Nichol, Dean and Burton Craige Professor of Law, UNC-Chapel Hill
T. LaFontaine Odom, Sr., former N.C. State Senator
Mary Norris Preyer Oglesby, Durham, N.C.
John D. Parker, Executive Director, Good Work Inc.
Honorable Francis I. Parker, former Associate Justice, N.C. Supreme Court
Ivan Parra, Director, Latino Community Development Center
Harper Peterson, Mayor of Wilmington, N.C.
Rev. Nancy Petty, Pastor, Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, Raleigh, N.C.
Rev. James L. Pike, Senior Pastor, Olin T. Binkley Baptist Church, Chapel Hill, N.C.
Marshall B. Pitts, Jr., Mayor, Fayetteville, N.C.
James K. Polk, former Special Assistant for Minority Affairs, Public Member, N.C. Real Estate Commission, former Member, Board of Directors of the American Red Cross
Abdul Rasheed, Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer, N.C. Community Development Initiative
J. George Reed, Executive Director, N.C. Council of Churches
Richard G. Roose, former N.C. Assistant District Attorney, Board Member, N.C. Commission on Indigent Defense Services
Dave Richard, Executive Director, N.C. Association for Retarded Citizens
John M. Richardson, Regional Minister, N.C. Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Samuel E. Roberson, General Presbyterian/Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Charlotte, N.C.
John Rosenthal, Photographer and Radio Commentator
Honorable Thomas W. Ross, Executive Director, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, former N.C. Superior Court Judge and former Director, N.C. Administrative Office of the Courts
Thomas R. Sallenger, former N.C. Assistant District Attorney, Chairman, Wilson County Board of Education, 1992-96
Charles A. Sanders, former Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Glaxo Inc.
David Sedaris, Author and Radio Commentator, 2001 Winner of Thurber Prize for American Humor
Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans, Chair Emeritus, Duke University Endowment, former Trustee, Duke University

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James H. Semans, Physician and Honorary Member, N.C. School of the Arts Board of Trustees

Herb Sendek, Head Men's Basketball Coach, N.C. State University

Rev. Robert E. Seymour, Pastor Emeritus, Olin T. Binkley Baptist Church, Chapel Hill, N.C.

Dean E. Smith, Coach Emeritus, UNC-Chapel Hill Men's Basketball Team

Lanty L. Smith, Chair, Soles, Brower, Smith & Co., Chair, Precision Fabrics Group, former President, Burlington Industries

Lee Smith, Novelist and two-time Winner of the O. Henry Award

Roger W. Smith, Sr., former President, Wake County Bar Association, former Member, N.C. State Bar Council and N.C. State Bar Ethics Committee, President, N.C. Supreme Court Historical Society

Wade M. Smith, former N.C. State Representative, former President, Wake County Bar Association, Winner of 2000 Distinguished Alumni Award, UNC-Chapel Hill

Elizabeth Spencer, Novelist and Winner of N.C. Award for Literature, 2002 N.C. Literary Hall of Fame Inductee

Adam Stein, former President, N.C. Academy of Trial Attorneys, former Chair, N.C. Commission on Indigent Defense Services, Member, Board of Governors, Association of Trial Lawyers of America

William W. Taylor, III, former Professor of Law, UNC-Chapel Hill, former Chair, Criminal Justice Section, American Bar Association

David B. Thornton, former N.C. Assistant District Attorney

Elizabeth K. Thurbee, Executive Director, Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Charlotte

Howard F. Twiggs, former N.C. State Representative, former President, Association of Trial Lawyers of America, former president N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers

Trip Van Noppen, Director, Carolinas Office, Southern Environmental Law Center

Honorable James R. Vosburgh, former N.C. Superior Court Judge

Jerry Waller, Retired N.C. probation officer

Melvin L. Watt, U.S. Representative, N.C. 12th District, former N.C. State Senator, former President, Mecklenburg County Bar

Katherine Stern Weaver, President, Residence Development Company

Honorable John Webb, former Associate Justice, N.C. Supreme Court

Judith Wegner, Professor of Law and former Dean, UNC-Chapel Hill

Reverend Mauricio W. West, Administrator, Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte

Honorable Willis P. Whichard, former Associate Justice, N.C. Supreme Court, former Associate Judge, N.C. Court of Appeals, former N.C. State Senator and Representative, Dean and Professor of Law, Campbell University

Jim Wiggins, Executive Director, N.C. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Rev. Mel Williams, Watts Street Baptist Church, Durham, N.C.

Rev. William H. Willimon, Dean of the Chapel and Professor of Christian Ministry, Duke University

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David R. Work, Executive Director, N.C. Board of Pharmacy

Fred Yates, Mayor, Winfall, N.C. and Political Action Chair, N.C. National Association
for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Honorable H.W. Zimmerman, Jr., former N.C. Superior Court Judge and former N.C.
District Attorney

cc: Honorable Marc Basnight, N.C. Senate President Pro Tempore