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UA: 52/24 Index: AMR 51/8102/2024 USA of June 3, 2024

USA TEXAS EXECUTION RESET

Ramiro Gonzales is set to be executed in Texas on June 26, 2024. He was sentenced to death in 2006 for a murder committed in 2001 when he was just 18 years old, emerging from a childhood filled with abuse and neglect. In 2022, he came within 48 hours of execution. Since then, the courts have denied claims that his death sentence was based on inaccurate and now recanted testimony from the state's expert witness, who had told the jury that Gonzales would commit more crimes if allowed to live. During his time in prison, Gonzales has maintained a record of non-violence and focused on self-improvement. We urge the authorities to stop his execution and commute his death sentence.

Write to the Members of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles urging them to:

- Stop the execution of Ramiro Gonzales and to ensure that his death sentence is commuted.

Write to:

Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles
Clemency Section
8610 Shoal Creek Boulevard
Austin, Texas 78757
Phone 512-406-5852
FAX 512-467-0945
E-mail: bpp_clemency@tdcj.texas.gov
Salutation: Dear Board Member,

And copy:

His Excellency David Louis COHEN
Ambassador
Embassy of the United States of America
490 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON K1N 1G8
Tel: (613) 238-5335 / 688-5335 (24h) Fax: (613) 688-3082

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In October 2002, Ramiro Gonzales pled guilty to the abduction and rape of a woman in September 2001 and received a life sentence. Soon after, he admitted to the sexual assault and murder of an 18-year-old woman in January 2001 while robbing a drug supplier's home. At the time, Gonzales was just 18 years old. In 2006, a jury convicted him of capital murder. During sentencing, a psychiatrist testified that Gonzales posed a "future danger," a claim required for a death sentence in Texas. However, such predictions have been proven unscientific and unreliable.

In 2021, Gonzales's appeal lawyers requested the same psychiatrist to reevaluate him. The psychiatrist noted Gonzales's remorse and acceptance of responsibility for the murder. He also detailed Gonzales's troubled family history, including substance abuse and physical and sexual abuse. Gonzales began using drugs after the death of a close aunt, spiraling into severe addiction. He dropped out of school at 16 and committed crimes to support his habit.

In 2022, the psychiatrist revisited his trial testimony, acknowledging that his earlier statements about recidivism rates were inaccurate. Gonzales's execution was initially scheduled for July 13, 2022, but was stayed by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals (TCCA) two days prior. The case was sent back to a county judge to assess the claim about the false recidivism rates, but the judge recommended denial, and the TCCA accepted this, allowing the execution to proceed.

At the 2006 sentencing, the defense presented evidence of Gonzales's abandonment by his teenage mother and the lack of supervision during his childhood. Witnesses described the physical and sexual abuse he endured, including abuse by a cousin and an older woman. Gonzales began abusing substances at age 11 and had the emotional maturity of a young teenager. The US Supreme Court has recognized the potential for reform in young people, noting that their immaturity and poor judgment do not vanish at 18. Texas has executed many individuals for crimes committed at 18 or 19, and Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases.

Please take action as soon as possible until June 26, 2024! The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.

https://amnesty.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/OUTCOME-UA_35-24_USA.pdf