

URGENT ACTION

FIFTH MISSISSIPPI EXECUTION OF 2012 GOES AHEAD

Michael Brawner was executed in Mississippi on 12 June for a quadruple murder in 2001. This was the fifth execution in Mississippi so far this year, out of 21 nationwide.

On 25 April 2001, 24-year-old **Michael Brawner** shot dead Barbara Brawner, from whom he had been divorced the previous month, her parents, Jane and Carl Craft, and his four-year-old daughter, Candice Paige Brawner, at the Craft home in rural northern Mississippi. He was arrested the following day at his fiancée's apartment, and sentenced to death in April 2002.

On 11 June 2012, the Mississippi Supreme Court rejected an appeal to rehear the case, voting four votes to four, with a ninth judge not taking part in the decision, as in April 2001 she had been District Attorney of Tate County, where the murders were committed. Under court procedures, when there is a tied vote, usually the earlier decision stands. Michael Brawner's lawyer appealed to the US Supreme Court to stop the execution, saying that he could find no other case in the USA where an execution had gone ahead after a tied vote in a state supreme court. He argued in his brief to the US Supreme Court that such an occurrence did "not comport with the heightened process that is due in death penalty cases". The Court refused to take the case, and the Governor of Mississippi declined to intervene.

Michael Brawner was put to death by lethal injection. In his final statement, he said that he wished to apologize to the family of his victims, but said that he could not change what he had done, adding "maybe this will bring you a little peace". He was pronounced dead at 6.18pm local time.

This was the fifth execution in Mississippi this year, and the 21st nationwide. There have been 1,298 executions in the USA since judicial killing resumed in 1977, 20 of them in Mississippi.

No further appeals by the UA Network are requested. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the first update of UA 155/12. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR51/040/2012/en>

Name: Michael Brawner

Gender: m

Further information on UA: 155/12 AMR 51/045/2012 Issue Date: 13 June 2012

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