

URGENT ACTION

CLEMENCY DENIED; MAN EXECUTED IN TEXAS

Yokamon Hearn was executed in Texas on 18 July after the state Board of Pardons and Paroles denied clemency and the governor and the courts declined to intervene.

On 16 July, the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles rejected **Yokamon Hearn's** clemency petition which had sought commutation of his death sentence or a temporary reprieve. His lawyers' attempts to get back into federal court to argue that Yokamon Hearn had been denied constitutionally effective legal representation at trial or during his initial appeals were unsuccessful. On the afternoon of 18 July, the US Supreme Court refused to issue a stay of execution, including on the question of whether Yokamon Hearn's mental impairment was of sufficient seriousness that it would render his execution unconstitutional.

Yokamon Hearn was pronounced dead at 6.37pm, about 25 minutes after the lethal injection began. He became the first prisoner in Texas to be executed using a single drug, pentobarbital. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice had announced a week earlier that they were switching methods because its supply of one of the drugs used in its previous three-drug protocol (pancuronium bromide) had expired. Ohio, Arizona, Idaho and Washington State have already adopted a single-drug lethal injection procedure, and Georgia is about to (see also USA: An embarrassment of hitches: Reflections on the death penalty, 35 years after *Gregg v. Georgia*, as states scramble for lethal injection drugs, 1 July 2011, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR51/058/2011/en>).

There have been 24 executions in the USA this year, and 1,301 since judicial killing resumed there in 1977. Texas accounts for 483 of these executions, including six this year.

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

This is the second update of UA 166/12. Further information : <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR51/044/2012/en> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR51/055/2012/en>

Name: Yokamon Hearn
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 166/12 Index: AMR 51/066/2012 Issue Date: 19 July 2012

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