

PUBLIC

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Further information on UA 191/06 (AMR 51/107/2006, 06 July 2006) - Death penalty / Legal concern

USA (Ohio) Rocky Barton (m), white, aged 49

Rocky Barton was executed in Ohio on 12 July 2006. He was sentenced to death for the murder of his wife, Kimbirli Barton. He had given up his appeals against his conviction and sentence.

Governor Bob Taft refused to intervene. In a statement, he said: "Mr. Barton did not request executive clemency, did not participate in the clemency process, and his attorney did not attend the clemency hearing. After a careful review of Mr. Barton's case, the Ohio Parole Board unanimously recommended (7-0) that clemency be denied. Following a thorough review of the judicial opinions, the report and recommendation of the Ohio Parole Board, recommendations from the Warren County Prosecutor's Office, and other relevant materials, I can find no compelling reason to grant clemency. For these reasons, I concur with the unanimous decision of the Parole Board and deny clemency for Rocky Barton. May God bless the family and friends of Kimbirli Barton."

Before he was put to death, Rocky Barton apologised to Kimbirli Barton's son and two daughters, who were present at the execution. He then said: "As Gary Gilmore said, 'let's do it'". Gary Gilmore was the first person to be put to death in the United States after the US Supreme Court approved new capital laws in 1976. Gilmore had also refused to appeal his sentence. At least 120 men and women have been put to death in the US after giving up their appeals.

Prison officials had examined Rocky Barton's veins on 10 and 11 July, apparently concerned at the potential for a repeat of the problems encountered during execution of Joseph Clark in Ohio on 2 May. In that execution, the lethal injection team had to search for almost an hour to find a suitable vein in which to insert the injection needle. The first vein they found collapsed after insertion of the catheter.

Rocky Barton is the 27th person to be put to death in the US this year and the 1,031st since the US resumed judicial killing in 1977. Ohio accounts for 22 of this total number of executions.

No further action is requested. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.