

PUBLIC

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Further information on EXTRA 106/99 (AMR 51/126/99, 10 August 1999) and follow-up (AMR 51/140/99, 1 September 1999) - Death penalty / Legal concern

**USA (Delaware) Justin L. Burrell, aged 19**

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On 22 October 1999, a Kent County Superior Court judge handed down a sentence of life without parole against Justin Burrell for the reckless first-degree murder of Dolly Ann Fenwick on 19 May 1998. In so doing, the judge was following the unanimous recommendation by the trial jury on 31 August 1999 that the teenager not be sentenced to death (see previous update).

The prosecutor, who had sought the death penalty, was quoted as saying that he was satisfied with the sentence: "Life without the possibility of parole is a very significant sentence for a 19-year-old kid".

Given that the crime occurred when Justin Burrell was 17, his sentence violates Article 37(a) of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that "neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without the possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age." The USA is one of only two countries not to have ratified the Convention. The other is the collapsed state of Somalia.

**No further action by the UA Network is requested at present. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.**