

PUBLIC

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Further information on EXTRA 59/01 (AMR 51/130/2001, 31 August 2001) and update (AMR 51/139/2001, 19 September) - Death penalty / Legal concern

USA (North Carolina)      Robert Bacon (m), black, aged 41

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On 2 October, North Carolina Governor Mike Easley commuted the death sentence of Robert Bacon to life imprisonment without parole. Robert Bacon had been scheduled to be executed on 5 October for the 1987 murder of Glennie Clark.

In a statement, Governor Easley said: "I am satisfied that the prosecutors and judges acted fairly and professionally in this case. However, as governor, my review of this matter in its totality causes me to conclude that the appropriate sentence for the defendant is life without parole". The governor's office refused to give more details about why he granted clemency. The case has been marked by allegations of racial discrimination (see original EXTRA).

According to Robert Bacon's lawyer, the prisoner cried on hearing the news and expressed how relieved he was, especially for his mother.

Robert Bacon becomes the 46<sup>th</sup> condemned prisoner in the USA to have his or her death sentence commuted on humanitarian grounds, by an act of executive clemency since the USA resumed executions in 1977. It is the fourth time that a North Carolina governor has granted clemency in a death penalty case since 1977. In that same period, 19 prisoners have been executed in the state out of a national total of 733. Fifty prisoners have been executed in the USA this year, including three in North Carolina.

**No further action by the UA Network is requested. Robert Bacon's lawyers have asked for their heartfelt thanks to be passed on to all who sent appeals.**