

PUBLIC

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Further information on EXTRA 49/01 (AMR 51/114/2001, 7 August 2001) - Death penalty / Legal concern

USA (Washington State) James Homer Elledge, white, aged 58

James Elledge was executed in the State of Washington early on 28 August 2001.

He was sentenced to death in October 1998 for the murder of Eloise Fitzner six months earlier. He had refused to appeal against his death sentence.

On 17 August, Governor Gary Locke refused to block the execution. On 24 August, the Catholic Archbishop of Seattle asked him to reconsider his decision, citing particular concern that Elledge would be the third of the four people executed in Washington State who had given up their appeals. On 27 August, the governor's legal counsel stated that "clemency is called for when there is some extraordinary circumstance that might require intervention or an action of grace from the governor...While we certainly are cognizant of the arguments about 'volunteers' and the problems that presents, particularly in this case, the governor doesn't believe those circumstances are present here".

James Elledge becomes the 46th person to be executed in the USA this year, and the 729th to be put to death in the country since it resumed judicial killing in 1977. More than 90 of these prisoners have been killed after giving up their appeals.

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