

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 285/05 (AMR51/179/2005, 4 November 2005) - Death Penalty

USA (Virginia) Robin Lovitt (m)

Robin Lovitt's death sentence has been commuted to life imprisonment by Virginia's Governor Warner.

According to news reports, Governor Warner, who had not commuted a single death sentence since he took office nearly four years ago, said, "No case has been more troubling... There's no case I've spent more time thinking about, praying about," and that the state had to "ensure that every time this ultimate sanction is carried out, it is done fairly." Governor Warner reportedly came to his decision because much of the evidence in the case had been illegally destroyed by a court clerk, preventing DNA testing which Lovitt's lawyers say could exonerate him.

A spokesman for the governor reportedly told the Reuters news agency that he had received roughly 1,500 phone calls, letters and e-mails from across the world about the case, almost all of them urging clemency.

Had the execution gone ahead, Robin Lovitt would have been the 1000th person to be executed in the USA since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976.

Thank you to everyone who sent appeals on Robin Lovitt's behalf. No further action is requested from the UA network.