

URGENT ACTION

OHIO GOVERNOR COMMUTES DEATH SENTENCE

Ohio Governor John Kasich has commuted the death sentence of Shawn Hawkins to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Shawn Hawkins was due to be executed on 14 June after more than two decades on death row.

In 1990 **Shawn Hawkins** was convicted of the June 1989 murders of Terrance Richard and Diamond Marteen. Since the trial, Shawn Hawkins has maintained his innocence, and his appeal lawyer has presented evidence casting doubt on the conviction. In May 2011, the Ohio clemency board voted by 7-0 that Governor John Kasich should commute the death sentence in this “troubling” case, adding that the Board members were “not confident in the death sentence in this case”.

In a statement on 8 June, Governor Kasich said “There is no doubt that the defendant played a significant, material role in this heinous crime, but precise details of that role are frustratingly unclear to the point that Ohio shouldn’t deliver the ultimate penalty in this case. Therefore, I am ordering that he spend the rest of his life in prison and have no chance of ever getting out. As someone who has experienced sudden and tragic loss, I know the pain that comes with losing loved ones. My prayers go out to the families of Diamond Marteen and Terrance Richard in the hope that they may find peace.”

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

This is the first update of UA 141/11. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR51/039/2011/en

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