

URGENT ACTION

ALABAMA CARRIES OUT ITS SIXTH EXECUTION OF 2024

Carey Grayson was executed in Alabama on 21 November 2024. In 1996, he became the last of four young males to be convicted of the 1994 murder of a woman. At four separate trials, the prosecutor used mutually incompatible theories, claiming each defendant was the most culpable. In 2004, Alabama told the US Supreme Court that Carey Grayson was not the most culpable of the four. His was the sole death sentence to survive on appeal. This was the sixth execution of the year in Alabama, the highest total in 2024 for any state.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

Carey Grayson's final appeals against Alabama's nitrogen hypoxia execution method were dismissed by the US Supreme Court on 21 November, without comment or dissent. One of the questions presented in the petition by Carey Grayson's lawyers was "does the Eighth Amendment's prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment bar a method of execution that includes conscious suffocation?"

The execution of Carey Grayson went ahead shortly after 6pm when the curtains to the witness room were opened. According to a media report, Carey Grayson, wearing the gas mask, "pulled against the gurney restraints". His "sheet-wrapped legs lifted off the gurney into the air at 6:14pm". He then "took a periodic series of more than a dozen gasping breaths for several minutes" before appearing to "stop breathing at 6:21pm". The curtains to the witness room were closed at 6:27pm. He was pronounced dead at 6:33pm.

After the execution, the daughter of the murder victim said that her mother had had her future take from her. She also said that "murdering inmates under the guise of justice should stop". She referred to the abuse that Carey Grayson had faced in his childhood, and that "society failed this man as a child, and my family suffered because of it".

Alabama's Attorney General Steve Marshall said that "Alabama has successfully used nitrogen hypoxia to carry out Carey Grayson's execution... Over 30 years ago, Grayson and his accomplices brutally murdered a complete stranger... It takes a vicious monster to commit this kind of crime. Tonight, justice has been served... And my hope is that one day it will not take three decades to provide justice for other victims of violent crimes".

Governor Kay Ivey said that an execution by nitrogen hypoxia – Alabama has now conducted three by this method – bears "no comparison to the death" experienced by the murder victim.

There have been 22 executions in eight states in the USA this year, bringing to 1,604 the total number of there since 1976 when the US Supreme Court upheld new capital statutes. Alabama accounts for 78 of these executions. This was the sixth execution of the year in Alabama, only the third year since 1976 that it has reached this total (the other two being 2009 and 2011). Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases, unconditionally.

NAME: Carey Grayson

THIS IS THE FIRST AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 96/24

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/8710/2024/en/>

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