



NO Death Penalty WI

MEDIA ADVISORY

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FORMER DEATH ROW INMATES TO CARRY MESSAGE AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY ACROSS WISCONSIN *13 exonorees to appear at 24 events in 10 cities, October 5-10, 2006*

In advance of this fall death penalty referendum, a national organization comprised of former death row inmates, all of whom were released from prison after being found innocent, will hold a national conference this weekend in Madison. From Thursday to Tuesday, members of "Witness to Innocence," including exonorees and their family members, will speak at churches, libraries, college campuses, and at fundraisers across Wisconsin.

"We know that too many innocents have been sentenced to death," said Sachin Chheda, Campaign Director for No Death Penalty Wisconsin. "We know that the death penalty is wrong for Wisconsin."

The November 7 ballot has an advisory referendum: "*Should the death penalty be enacted in the state of Wisconsin for cases involving a person who is convicted of first-degree intentional homicide, if the conviction is supported by DNA evidence?*"

Speakers across Wisconsin during the week include

- Juan Melendez, who spent 17 years on Florida's death row despite evidence of his innocence
- Ray Krone, who spent two years on Arizona's death row and 10 years total in prison for a murder he did not commit, due to faulty forensic evidence
- Shujaa Graham, who spent three years on California's death row and an additional three years in prison, after being framed for murder.
- Ron Keine, who spent two years on New Mexico's death row for a kidnapping, rape and murder he did not commit. Ron was released after a newspaper investigation determined that the star witness had perjured himself under police pressure. Ron is active in the Republican party and is a businessman in Michigan.

During appearances in Madison, Milwaukee, Janesville, Green Bay, Ripon, Stevens Point, La Crosse, Kenosha, Wauwatosa and Racine, the exonorees will tell their story and explain why they feel the death penalty is wrong for Wisconsin. At some events, they will be joined by family members of murder victims and advocates against the death penalty.

The schedule of events is attached. Additionally, exonorees and advocates will be available for media interviews throughout the week. Please call the No Death Penalty Wisconsin campaign at 414-412-6099 or email media@nodeathpenaltywi.org to schedule interviews.

No Death Penalty Wisconsin is a coalition of organizations and leaders, including Milwaukee County District Attorney E. Michael McCann, Dane County District Attorney Brian Blanchard, the Wisconsin Coalition Against the Death Penalty, Amnesty International, the League of Women Voters, the NAACP, the American Civil Liberties Union, Peace Action Wisconsin, and many others. The Coalition is dedicated to preventing the re-establishment of the death penalty in Wisconsin, and urges Wisconsin voters to vote "No" in this fall's referendum.

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Authorized and paid for by No Death Penalty Wisconsin, Jeff Sweetland, Treasurer