

DEATH PENALTY ACTION

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Execution Protests Planned As Silence From Stitt Continues

McAlester, Oklahoma - Protesters from numerous organizations opposed to executions will express their opposition to the killing of Phillip Hancock this morning with prayerful, peaceful protest vigils starting at 9am CT on November 30 at various locations, including at the Oklahoma State Penitentiary in McAlester, at the Governor's Mansion in Oklahoma City, other locations throughout Oklahoma, and on-line via Zoom at bit.ly/PhillipHancockVV (live-streamed on Death Penalty Action social media sites). Participation in the on-line virtual vigil is expected to include speakers from Italy, Germany, the UK and other locations, recognizing that this execution coincides with November 30 "[Cities for Life](#)" ceremonies marking the anniversary of the date in 1786 when the Italian municipality of Tuscany became the first jurisdiction in the world to legislatively abolish the death penalty.

On Wednesday, more than [8,000 petition signatures](#) were presented to the office of Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt, who has remained silent despite a recommendation for a commutation of sentence from the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board. [See video of the presentation](#), including remarks by former Oklahoma State Senator Connie Johnson and Rev. Bo Ireland, pastor at The Lazarus Community in Oklahoma City. The petitions urged Governor Stitt to follow the recommendation of the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board to grant clemency by commuting Mr. Hancock's death sentence to death by incarceration rather than execution.

"We remain hopeful that Governor Stitt will do the right thing and allow Mr. Hancock to live," said Abraham Bonowitz, executive director of Death Penalty Action, a national organization mobilizing opposition to executions in Oklahoma and across the United States. "It is sad that Governor Stitt has everyone on pins and needles about this. By unnecessarily stringing out his decision-making process for weeks, he has left the families of the victims in this case, all of Phil's advocates and loved ones, the prison workers, and Phil himself, waiting for the news. It doesn't have to be this way. On top of the self defense circumstances in this case, this last minute uncertainty is just one more glaring example of how broken the system is in Oklahoma, and that's another reason why at least 78% of Oklahomans support a halt to executions."

Regardless of the outcome of the execution, a "Red or Green Prayer Vigil" will take place at 2pm CT at The Lazarus Community at Clark United Methodist Church, 5808 NW 23rd St, Oklahoma City. These vigils take place following each Oklahoma execution at the location where 25 white crosses were erected along NW 23rd St in 2022 to protest the announcement that 25 execution dates had been set. Death penalty opponents gather to add either red or green paint to one of the crosses to indicate whether the prisoner in question has been killed, or allowed to live. Thus far only one cross has been painted green, for Richard Glossip, who has survived multiple execution dates and whose case remains in limbo before the US Supreme Court.

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