

DEATH PENALTY ACTION

For Immediate Release - - January 19, 2024

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ADVOCACY GROUPS CALL FOR HALT TO EXECUTION Protesters Decry Experimental Execution Method, Urge Sanctions on "Dr. Death"

MONTGOMERY, AL - As litigation continues in opposition to Alabama's scheduled first-ever experimentation with nitrogen hypoxia as the manner of execution for Kenneth Smith on January 25, 2024, advocates are engaging in a variety of actions and events to call for a halt to the execution.

"The discussion that is missing in all of this hubbub around nitrogen hypoxia is the mental torture of a second execution attempt," said Abraham Bonowitz, executive director of Death Penalty Action. "That, and the fact that if Kenny Smith were on trial today, he could not be sentenced to death at all because his jury was not unanimous regarding his sentence, and jury overrides were outlawed in Alabama in 2017. Alabama's capital punishment system as a whole is broken and cannot be trusted to get it right."

NEW: Death Penalty Action [launched a campaign](#) earlier this week urging the California Medical Board to investigate the activities of Dr. Joseph Antognini, who violates the Hippocratic Oath by supporting state efforts to experiment with controversial untried execution methods such as nitrogen hypoxia. Dr. Antognini testified on behalf of the state in December in a hearing regarding Alabama's planned experimentation with the untried execution method.

EVENTS DURING THE WEEK OF JANUARY 22-26, 2024

MONDAY, January 22, 2024 at 11am CT: Faith leaders are gathering in Montgomery at the Capitol steps to deliver a letter signed by more than 100 Alabama faith leaders from a dozen religions or denominations. The letter asks for an immediate halt to the use of nitrogen hypoxia.

TUESDAY, January 23, 2024 at 11am CT: Several Alabama legislators, **Rev. Dr. Jeff Hood**, and a broad coalition of Alabama organizations and their allies (listed below) will convene at the Capitol steps to deliver tens of thousands of petition signatures gathered on three separate but related petitions [opposing the execution](#) of Kenneth Smith, [opposing nitrogen hypoxia](#), and [calling for greater transparency](#) in Alabama executions. The petitions will be delivered to the office of Alabama Governor Kay Ivey following brief remarks from organizational leaders, several **Alabama legislators and Rev. Dr. Jeff Hood**, spiritual advisor to Kenneth Smith, who is risking his own life to be present in the execution chamber during the experimental execution. **Kenneth**

Smith himself is expected to address those gathered via a recording. This event will be livestreamed on Death Penalty Action's [Facebook](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#), and [Youtube](#) platforms.

THURSDAY, January 25, 2024: Execution protest vigils are scheduled in Atmore (at prison entrance, and by the men on death row inside the prison), Auburn, Birmingham, Camp Hill, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa. There will also be a [live, virtual vigil](#) convening death penalty opponents worldwide along with live feeds from concurrent Alabama vigils. This event is convened [via Zoom with those who register](#) and livestreamed on Death Penalty Action's [Facebook](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#), and [Youtube](#) platforms.

NOTICE: HEAR DIRECTLY FROM REV. DR. JEFF HOOD FOLLOWING THE EXECUTION

In the event that the execution goes forward, Rev. Dr. Jeff Hood, who will be in the execution chamber with Kenneth Smith, will address the media at a press conference at a hotel conference space close to the prison. This will take place 45 minutes following the press conference by the ADOC. This event will be available via zoom and livestreamed on the same links as the live virtual vigil, provided above. Exact physical location TBA next week.

GROUPS PARTICIPATING IN TUESDAY'S RALLY & PETITION DELIVERY:

- Advocates4Justice
- Alabama Arise
- Alabama CURE
- Alabama Forward
- Alabama New South Coalition
- Alabama Poor People's Campaign
- Alabama State Conference of the NAACP
- Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
- BEC2BAMA
- Birmingham DSA
- Birmingham Friends Meeting
- Conservatives Concerned About the Death Penalty
- Death Penalty Action
- Episcopal Peace Fellowship
- Equal Justice USA's Evangelical Network
- Faith in Action Alabama
- Faith Leaders of Color Coalition/flocc
- Gainesville (Florida) Citizens for Alternatives to the Death Penalty
- Georgians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty
- Grace Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa
- Robert S. and Jean E. Graetz Foundation
- Greater Birmingham Ministries
- Green County Democrat
- Joe James, et al --**PRESENTE!**
- Journey of Hope -- from violence to healing
- Justice and Mercy for All, Birmingham
- Kansas Coalition Against the Death Penalty
- L'chaim! Jews Against the Death Penalty
- M.A.A.V.I.S.
- Mary's House Catholic Worker, Birmingham
- Mass Incarceration Must End Inc.
- Nevada Coalition Against the Death Penalty
- North Alabama Democratic Socialists of America

- North Alabama Peace Network
- North Carolina Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty
- Outreach Team St. Paul UMC Birmingham
- Patch Adams, MD - The Gesundheit! Institute
- Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty
- Red Letter Christians
- Restorative Solutions
- Restorative Strategies, LLC
- St Paul UMC, Birmingham
- Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate
- South Carolinians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty
- South Dakotans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty
- Southern Poverty Law Center- Alabama State Office
- turner mcalh & Associates, BC
- Tuscaloosa Action
- United Church of Christ
- Unitarian Universalist Church of Birmingham and Tuscaloosa
- Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Montgomery
- Vine and Fig Tree Community
- Voiceless Behind Bars
- Witness to innocence
- The Woods Foundation
- Worth Rises

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