

Date

Name, Address, Phone and Fax of Governor

Dear Governor _____,

An execution date of _____ has been set for _____. _____ was a juvenile, under the age of 18 years, at the time of the offense. I urge you to commute his sentence to a more appropriate punishment for a juvenile offender. In appealing for clemency, I in no way intend to dismiss the crime or to disregard the anguish and suffering of the victim's family and friends. *Please see the Case overview for information about the crime.*

As _____ was an adolescent at the time of his offense, his execution would be contrary to the criminal justice standards that _____ *insert state* and the United States advocate. Adolescence is a transitional period, a time of considerable change, when emotions, judgment, impulse control and even the brain itself are still developing. To execute such an individual would contradict the fundamental principles of American justice, which punishes according to the degree of culpability.

As a member of the world community, the US acts almost alone when it executes juvenile offenders. Indeed, in 2002, the US was the only nation to execute juvenile offenders. Since 1990, only seven countries have reportedly executed juveniles: Iran, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Yemen, Pakistan and the USA, with that number of nations dwindling to only four since the year 2000; Iran, the USA, Pakistan, and the DRC. The US is the only country in the world which regularly executes juvenile offenders at a pace that is disturbing by international standards. Additionally, within the US only a handful of states permit the execution of those less than 18 year of age at the time of the crime. Of the 38 states that allow the death penalty as a punishment only 22 sanction it for the execution of juveniles. Alarmingly however, only 7 of the 22 states have actually executed juvenile offenders since the reinstatement of the death penalty.

I appeal to you to abide by the criminal justice principles of the state of _____ and to exercise the powers vested in your office to commute the sentence of _____ to a more human punishment.

Yours sincerely,

Your name and signature here