

# DEATH PENALTY ACTION

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## **Brother of Ohio Prisoner Kevin Keith Urges Governor DeWine: "Bring my Innocent Brother Home for Thanksgiving."**

Columbus, OH - In a Q&A session with reporters following the release of the final segment of Kim Kardashian's "[The System](#)," an eight-part podcast demonstrating the innocence of former Ohio death row prisoner Kevin Keith, Kevin's older brother, Charles Keith, made an urgent plea directed to Ohio Governor Mike DeWine;

"There's absolutely zero evidence against my brother. The system is broken when such a wrongful conviction can be allowed to stand by the courts while a murderer walks free because of corrupt public officials. This is why we have executive clemency. Governor DeWine, on behalf of my brother, our mother, myself, and our entire family, I'm begging you; Please bring Kevin home by Thanksgiving."

Kevin Keith, whose death sentence was commuted by then-Governor Strickland just 13 days before he was to be executed, is demonstrably innocent and evidence hidden by corrupt public officials clearly points to the likely killer. Much of this is spelled out in a petition submitted by Mr. Keith's attorneys to the Ohio Parole Board on August 15, 2022, and in Kim Kardashian's podcast, "The System," which is available free on Spotify. [Read the Clemency Petition and see additional information here.](#)

During the Zoom conference, Charles Keith shared a number of documents demonstrating aspects of the corruption that led to **Kevin Keith being purposely wrongly convicted** in order to protect the real killer, a police informant. These documents have never been seen in court,

but were enough to convince the Ohio Public Defender to more fully investigate the case, leading Governor Strickland to commute the death sentence. The Ohio Public Defender continued to discover even more evidence of Kevin's innocence, such that Governor Strickland now says he wishes he did more than simply commute the death sentence to Life Without Parole. Governor Strickland was among those whose comments were included in the final episode of "The System."

"There is an epidemic of wrongful conviction in this country and in Ohio," said Abraham Bonowitz, Executive Director of Death Penalty Action, an organization supporting Charles Keith in his efforts to free his brother. "It takes a miracle just to uncover hidden evidence, but the dysfunction of our criminal legal system sets up a situation like Kevin's, where no court will look at it. That's why we have to take it to the court of public opinion."

Death Penalty Action is asking concerned citizens to help #BringKevinHome by calling Governor DeWine and signing a petition that Charles Keith and Death Penalty Action plan to deliver next week. Today they announced a "March to #BringKevinHome" from the 3rd Street side of the Ohio Capitol Building to the Governor's office, starting at noon on November 21, 2022. The event will go on unless it is clear that a process is underway to free Kevin Keith by Thanksgiving.

Charles Keith was joined on the Zoom conference by other family members who have recently come within days of the execution of their loved ones despite very real questions about the evidence used to convict them. These included:

- Kwame Ajamu and his wife, LaShawn Ajamu. Kwame is one of Ohio's eleven exonerated death row survivors and serves as Chairman of Witness to Innocence, the national organization of exonerated death row survivors. LaShawn is the sister of a murder victim and serves on the board of Ohioans to Stop Executions
- Melinda Elkins Dawson, wife of Clarence Elkins, who faced the death penalty but received a life sentence for the murder of Melinda's mother. The state would not listen, so Melinda had to investigate the case herself. She did, and Clarence was exonerated.
- Antoinette Jones, Sister of Julius Jones, who was hours from execution one year ago this week in Oklahoma;
- John Lucio and his wife, Michelle Lucio. John is the son of Melissa Lucio, a woman who came within two days of being executed in Texas for a crime that never occurred. Melissa Lucio awaits an evidentiary hearing ordered by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. Her prosecutor went to prison for corruption.
- Roderick Reed (by phone), brother of Texas Death Row prisoner Rodney Reed, who was days from execution in 2019 and who awaits a ruling from the US Supreme Court about whether he filed his request for DNA testing too late. (The case is not about the evidence. It's about procedural rules.)

[Watch a recording of the event here.](#)