

Governor Musgrove issued the following statement:

“I am a strong supporter of the death penalty and have pledged to faithfully carry out the laws of the State and Nation. However, there are currently compelling legal questions pending before the Mississippi Supreme Court and the United States Supreme Court that could directly affect the sentence of Ron Chris Foster.

This is an unusual circumstance where a recent United States Supreme Court decision regarding execution of the mentally retarded may have an effect on Mr. Foster’s sentence. The issue of whether Foster is mentally retarded has not been specifically addressed under the guidelines of this case.

Additionally, a petition to consider whether 17 year old offenders may be executed will be taken up by the United States Supreme Court at the end of January. Mr. Foster was 17 on the date of his crime.

With these matters pending I am convinced that the prudent course of action is to stay the scheduled execution of Ron Chris Foster until these questions have been answered.”

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