



STATE OF TEXAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GEORGE W. BUSH
GOVERNOR

February 9, 1998

Mr. Richard B. Frantzreb
1873 Hiddenview Lane
Roseville, CA 95661

Dear Mr. Frantzreb:

Thank you for your letter about Karla Faye Tucker.

When I was sworn in as the Governor of Texas, I took an oath of office to uphold the laws of our state, including the death penalty. My responsibility is to make sure our laws are enforced fairly and evenly without preference or special treatment. According to the Texas Constitution, the Governor may only commute a sentence if the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles recommends it. Because the 18-member Board denied commutation in this case, my only independent authority as Governor was to grant a one-time 30-day stay of execution.

Many people have contacted my office about this execution. I respect the strong convictions that have prompted some to call for mercy and others to emphasize accountability and consequences. Like many touched by this case, I sought guidance through prayer. I have concluded that judgments about the heart and soul of an individual on death row are best left to a higher authority.

Karla Faye Tucker acknowledged she was guilty of a horrible crime. She was convicted and sentenced by a jury of her peers. The role of the state is to enforce our laws and make sure all individuals are treated fairly under those laws. The state must make sure each individual sentenced to death has opportunity for access to the courts and thorough legal review. The courts, including the United States Supreme Court, reviewed the legal issues in this case; therefore, I did not grant a 30-day delay.

My prayers are with Karla Faye Tucker, her victims and their families.

Sincerely,



GEORGE W. BUSH

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