

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Today, March 24, 2010, Kristin Houlé, Executive Director of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, issued the following statement in response to the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to grant a stay of the execution of Hank Skinner.

*Austin, Texas* - The Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (TCADP) is extremely pleased that the U.S. Supreme Court has granted a stay of the scheduled execution Hank Skinner. Skinner was scheduled to be executed on March 24 for the murder of Twila Busby, even though critical DNA evidence that was collected at the crime scene has never been tested. Mr. Skinner has steadfastly insisted he is innocent of the crime. This case illustrates the importance of testing DNA when there is readily available scientific evidence.

By granting this stay the Court will have more time to determine whether to hear Mr. Skinner's appeal. Hopefully, the court will agree to hear Mr. Skinner's case and ultimately allow him the chance to prove his innocence through DNA testing.

This case illustrates dramatically the many serious flaws in the capital punishment system. TCADP joins with a growing chorus of diverse voices, including those of law enforcement, religious leaders, murder victim family members, and state legislators in calling for an end to this arbitrary and error-prone form of punishment.

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