

MEDIA ADVISORY**June 1, 2023**

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Community forum to address Dallas death penalty case of Charles Don Flores

Experts will discuss common elements of wrongful convictions, including mistaken eyewitness identifications

Dallas, Texas—Community members and local justice advocates will gather on Thursday, June 8, 2023, at Church of the Disciple in DeSoto to learn about the troubling case of Charles Don Flores and elements his case shares with other wrongful convictions.

Charles Don Flores has spent more than 20 years on death row in Texas for a crime he maintains he did not commit. No physical evidence has ever linked him to the death of Betty Black, who was shot in her Farmers Branch home on January 29, 1998, during an attempted robbery perpetrated by two males. One of those males, Richard Childs, a white man and, as it turns out, the son of a local police officer, was identified the day of the murder and later pled guilty to shooting Mrs. Black. As part of his secretly negotiated plea deal, Childs did not have to testify against Flores and was paroled after serving only 15 years in prison.

Flores was convicted and sentenced to death by a Dallas County jury in 1999. Texas courts have refused to consider evidence that undermines his conviction, and the case against him is fraught with many concerning issues, including the use of forensic hypnosis on a key witness who later made a mid-trial, in court “identification”. In the final days of the 88th Texas Legislature regular session, lawmakers passed Senate Bill 338, which prohibits the use of hypnotically induced statements in a criminal trial. If it becomes law, Texas will join 27 other states in banning the practice.

WHAT: Anatomy of a Wrongful Conviction: The Case of Charles Don Flores

WHEN: Thursday, June 8, 2023, 6:00 to 7:30 PM

WHERE: Church of the Disciple (220 S Cockrell Hill Rd, DeSoto, TX 75115)

WHO: Christopher Scott, who was wrongfully convicted of murder in Dallas in 1997 and exonerated in 2009; Gretchen Sween, Flores’s appellate attorney; and Dr. John

Wixted, an expert on memory and eyewitness identification, are the featured speakers.

This event is sponsored by Church of the Disciple; Dallas for Change; Faith in Texas; In Defense of Black Lives Dallas; The Liberation Fund; Somos Tejas; Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (TCADP); and Witness to Innocence. It is free and open to the public.

For more information about the event, contact TCADP Deputy Director Tiara Cooper at TCooper@tcadp.org. To arrange an interview with any of the speakers, contact TCADP Executive Director Kristin Houlé Cuellar at kristin@tcadp.org or 512-552-5948.

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