



## PRESS RELEASE

---

### Statement of the Maryland Attorney General Regarding Capital Punishment and Scheduled Federal Executions

**BALTIMORE, MD (December 4, 2020)** – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today released the following statement:

*“Donald Trump continues to shatter moral and legal norms during the final weeks of his presidency. With the execution of Daniel Lee in July of this year, President Trump ended a 17-year hiatus in federal executions. He has since executed seven more people in a five-month period. With his latest execution of Orlando Hall on November 19<sup>th</sup>, President Trump became the first lame-duck president to carry out an execution in 131 years.*

*“President Trump has scheduled an astounding five additional executions in the weeks before he leaves office. **If these executions take place, he will have executed more people than any president in over a century.** Worse yet, these executions are taking place during a global pandemic that limits the ability of attorneys to consult with their incarcerated clients.*

*“Death is irrevocable, and the risk of executing an innocent person is far too high. Indeed, over 170 death row inmates have been exonerated since 1973. The death penalty is also tainted by systemic racism. Research shows that black men are far more likely than white men to receive the death penalty, especially if their victims were white. Moreover, the death penalty does not deter violent crime, and costs significantly more than imprisoning defendants for life.*

*“Rather than rush through executions in the last hours of his presidency, President Trump should commute the sentences of all 54 people on federal death row to life without the possibility of parole. To be sure, these men and women have been convicted of horrific crimes, and have caused immeasurable suffering. By commuting their sentences to life without the possibility of parole, President Trump can ensure that these prisoners will spend the rest of their lives behind bars, while still recognizing the fundamental injustices of the death penalty.*

*“President Trump’s thirst for the death of the five condemned men cannot be justified based upon public safety. None will ever see the light of day outside prison walls. At a minimum, Trump should stay their executions. Hurrying through these executions before January 20, 2021, demonstrates a disregard for the health and safety of everyone involved in carrying out an execution, including the defendants’ attorneys and corrections officers.*

*“Perhaps President Trump believes his spree of executions is a sign of strength. In fact, it is a demonstration of weakness. Trump has a final opportunity, even as he leaves office, to show that our nation adheres to the norms of due process, of fairness and of justice when it deals with the most evil among us. To do otherwise is a violation of our democratic principles.”*