



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement on the Execution of Loran Cole

Tonight, we the people of the State of Florida executed Loran Cole.

Tonight we killed the man responsible for the death of John Edwards. And we also killed a father, a son, a brother, a friend. We grieve with all of Loran's loved ones. We do not minimize the harm he caused, and we also grieve with his victims and their loved ones.

While there is never a legal or moral justification for the death penalty in modern society, Loran's execution feels particularly calculated, and particularly hypocritical.

Less than a month before the Governor chose Loran for execution, he and the Legislature recognized the lifelong and devastating harm the State caused to children who were sentenced to the Dozier School for Boys. The legislation acknowledged their deep suffering and allowed survivors to apply for compensation.

And yet, tonight we executed a Dozier survivor. Loran spent several months there as a teen. He was beaten, raped, and forced to clean up the remains of other tortured children.

In Florida, the Governor has the sole discretion on when, whether, and for whom to set an execution. The process is shrouded in mystery and secrecy. We have no way of knowing how or why Loran was chosen, and no way of knowing who might be next.

This week, we tried to take more than 7,000 signed petitions to the Governor, to let him know the people of the State of Florida and beyond did not want Loran's execution to proceed in their name. We were told that due to construction, there is no way for the public to access the Governor's office. Not even a makeshift reception area to allow Floridians' voices to be heard. The clemency board was also short-staffed this week, with most of its personnel away at a conference.

A selection process shrouded in secrecy. No way for the public to make its voice heard. Key officials unavailable the week we are killing a human being. This is no system of orderly justice.

We the people of the State of Florida deserve and demand better.

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FADP is a Florida-based, state-wide organization of individuals and groups working together to end the death penalty in Florida. Our network includes dozens of state and local groups and thousands of individual Floridians, including murder victims' family members and other survivors of violent crime, law enforcement professionals, families of the incarcerated, and death row exonerees.