

**Letter in Support of Clemency:
Understanding the Legal Case of Terry Williams**

Many of those who support CAIR-Philadelphia have read our letter in support of clemency for Terry Williams and understand the basic moral and ethical position articulated therein. *However, it is important that our supporters understand **CAIR's moral and ethical position**, as articulated in that letter, **within the context of Terry Williams's legal case.***

Our letter was written in support of a clemency petition filed on behalf of a man named Terry Williams. The term "clemency," as it is used in this context, is a legal term. For a **general understanding of the term "clemency"** as that term is used in the PA criminal justice system, I encourage you to explore the [website of the PA Board of Pardons and Paroles](#). To understand the term "clemency" in the death penalty context, you will also need to read the specific information related to the topic "commutation."

Though the PA Board of Pardons provides thorough information regarding the terms "clemency" and "commutation," those terms must also be understood as they relate to the **procedural history of Terry's application for clemency** at the time of CAIR-Philadelphia's involvement. At the time, CAIR-Philadelphia submitted our letter in support, Terry sits on death row. Having lost his final legal appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, Terry's last hope for survival rests in the hands of Governor Tom Corbett and the PA Board of Pardons. His attorneys submitted a petition to the Board of Pardons asking the Board to make a recommendation of clemency to the Governor. The governor is then charged with making the final decision as to whether the Commonwealth of PA will execute Terry Williams. Terry's attorneys, and those who have written in support of Terry, are asking Governor Corbett to commute Terry's sentence to a sentence of life without parole. Under PA law, "life means life." Therefore, regardless of the governor's decision, Terry Williams will never leave state custody alive. The only question for the governor is whether Terry is allowed to live the remainder of his natural life incarcerated, or whether Terry's life is cut short by the Commonwealth of PA.

Yet, even as I describe the procedural posture of Terry's clemency petition, I realize that I cannot fully describe Terry's life, or legal case, to you. But Terry's attorneys can, and they do so with eloquence and with compassion on the [website they created in support of Terry](#). On that website, you can read more extensively about the **life of Terry Williams, the crimes Terry committed, the legal struggle to save his life**, and those who have supported Terry (included the widow of Terry's murder victim, his former jurors, collections of former prosecutors and judges, and clergy and other representatives from all three Abrahamic faiths). This website includes exact images of actual legal, and other advocacy, documents submitted on Terry's behalf. These original documents, and other information contained on the website, undoubtedly influenced my decision to support Terry, and I hope that it will do the same for each of you.