



EMBASSY OF GREECE
Washington, DC

EU Presidency □

31 January 2003

The Honorable Rick Perry

Governor of Texas
State Capital
Office of the Governor
PO Box 12428
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Governor Perry,

On behalf of the European Union, Greece as its current [president](#), together with Italy, its subsequent president, and the European Commission, I am copying to you an urgent humanitarian appeal that we have made to the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles to spare the life of John (Jackie) Elliott who has been sentenced to death and is scheduled to be executed in February 4, 2003. We recognize that, under the Texas constitution, the Governor does not have the power to commute a death sentence unless on the recommendation of the Board of Pardons and Paroles, but nevertheless we believe that you should be aware of our stance on the death penalty and our particular concerns about the case of John (Jackie) Elliott.

As stated in the EU Memorandum on the Death Penalty (<http://www.eurunion.org/legislat/DeathPenalty/eumemorandum.htm>), which has been shared with you, the European Union is opposed to the death penalty in all cases and accordingly aims at its universal abolition, seeking a global moratorium on the death penalty as a first step.

Where the death penalty is retained, we urge states to observe minimum standards, which include imposing capital punishment only where the guilt of the person charged is based upon clear and convincing evidence leaving no room for an alternative explanation of the facts; furthermore, a death sentence should not be carried out where an individual complaint is being considered under international procedures. We understand that John (Jackie) Elliott has made an application for new DNA testing to be carried out in his case, which may cast some doubt on the safety of his original conviction, and we have also learnt that he has made an application to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which has not yet been decided.

We are therefore respectfully urging the Board of Pardons and Paroles to take all the aforementioned factors into account and to commute Mr. Elliott's sentence to any penalty other

than capital punishment in accordance with international law.

Sincerely,

George Savinales Borghardt

Ambassador of Greece of Italy

Ambassador

Legation of the European Commission

[Letter to Texas Board of Pardons & Paroles](#)

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