
Biden commutes federal death Sentences amid shift in U.S. Execution policy



Published on December 23, 2024

Document Date: Sat, Jan 24 2026 04:21:28 am

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. President Joe Biden has commuted the sentences of 37 federal death row inmates to life imprisonment without parole, marking a significant move in his campaign to end capital punishment at the federal level. Three individuals, including the Boston Marathon bomber and the Pittsburgh synagogue shooter, were excluded from this clemency.

Biden reaffirmed his opposition to the death penalty, stating, “We must stop its use at the federal level,” adding that he could not “in good conscience” allow the next administration to resume executions he halted. This decision follows a Justice Department moratorium on federal executions issued during his presidency.

The clemency includes individuals convicted of serious crimes, such as nine murders of fellow inmates and four deaths during bank robberies. Among those spared is Len Davis, a former New Orleans police officer convicted of orchestrating a murder while leading a drug ring. Biden expressed deep sympathy for the victims, emphasizing his condemnation of the perpetrators’ actions.

The measure comes ahead of President-elect Donald Trump’s return in January. Trump, who resumed federal executions in 2020 after a 17-year hiatus, executed 13 inmates during his final six months in office and has vowed to expand capital punishment in his second term.

Biden’s decision does not affect the approximately 2,250 death row inmates convicted in state courts, where 70 executions have occurred during his presidency. Currently, 23 states have abolished the death penalty, with six others imposing moratoriums.

Earlier this month, Biden commuted 1,500 sentences, issued 39 pardons, and granted clemency to his son, Hunter Biden, convicted on tax and gun charges. These actions underscore Biden's broader commitment to criminal justice reform.