



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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CHUCK CANTERBURY
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JAMES O. PASCO, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

16 March 2017

The Honorable Aramis D. Ayala
Office of the State Attorney
415 North Orange Avenue
Orlando, FL 32801

Dear Ms. Ayala,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to express our strong opposition to your decision not to seek the death penalty in the case against Markeith Loyd because of your personal political beliefs on the subject of the death penalty.

State Attorneys who cannot overcome their own prejudices or act counter to their personal political beliefs, like you, should recuse themselves from cases and decisions in which these prejudices and beliefs run counter to the interest and the people that we in law enforcement are supposed to serve. We echo the sentiments of your governor, Rick Scott, and State Attorney General, Pam Bondi, who have called upon you to recuse yourself from this case and allow a more even-handed and fair-minded prosecutor make the decision. The families of this killer's victims and the law enforcement agencies in Florida and around the country are outraged by your decision. If this decision stands, it will be, without question, a miscarriage of justice.

The late and very distinguished Floridian Janet W. Reno was personally opposed to the death penalty. However, she refused to let her politics interfere with her passion and commitment to justice. As State Attorney, she successfully prosecuted 103 death penalty cases—more than any other officer at the time. As U.S. Attorney General, she led the U.S. Department of Justice in seeking the death penalty for Timothy McVeigh who later became the first person executed by the Federal government since 1963. Janet Reno understood and carried out her responsibilities and did not allow her personal beliefs to deny justice to the victims of violence.


Markeith Loyd murdered Sadie Dixon, who was carrying his unborn child, and was the subject of a Statewide manhunt. After being spotted at a local Walmart, he was confronted by Orlando Police Department Master Sergeant Debra Clayton. He shot the officer twice and then a third time while she was down. He was also hit by return fire but was protected by the soft body armor he was wearing. He fled the scene in a stolen vehicle, firing at another officer in an unmarked vehicle but missed. Immediately following the killing of Master Sergeant Clayton, Deputy First Class Norman Lewis, a motorcycle officer, responded in an effort to catch the

— BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION —

murderer and was killed in a collision with another vehicle. This violent killer is responsible for four deaths and you decline to seek justice for them and their families. You know all of this—you are the individual charged to seek justice in this case and you have chosen not to do so because of your personal prejudice and political beliefs. Your decision is reprehensible and indefensible and you are a disgrace to the office you hold.

On behalf of the more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, we demand that you reverse your decision or recuse yourself from this and other cases which potentially involve the death penalty until such time as the voters of the Ninth Judicial Circuit can replace you. If I can provide any additional details about this case or our views on your decision, please do not hesitate to contact me or Jim Pasco, Senior Advisor to the National President in my Washington office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Canterbury". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "C".

Chuck Canterbury
National President