

# National District Attorneys Association

## Newsclips

May 2, 2012

### Today's Clip Headlines

- **Governor To Sign Sweeping Justice Reform Bill**
- **District Attorneys Protest Measure That Would End Death Penalty**
- **Iowa Begins Protective Order Alert System**
- **Gansler Pushes Supreme Court Appeal On DNA Ruling**
- **Sex Offenders Could Lose Parental Rights Under Law Signed By Gov. Rick Snyder**
- **Oklahoma Executes Man Sentenced To Death Twice**
- **Governor To Sign Sweeping Justice Reform Bill**
- **With Green Beret Tactics, Combating Gang Warfare**

### Clip Synopses and Links

*Atlanta Journal Constitution*

#### **Governor To Sign Sweeping Justice Reform Bill**

The way Georgia punishes thousands of nonviolent offenders will forever change when Gov. Nathan Deal signs landmark legislation Wednesday. It represents a first step in the governor's long-term plan to reserve prison beds for the state's most violent criminals.

Deal told *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* he will also sign an executive order continuing the work of a special council that studied the state's prison system and recommended sweeping changes to control unimpeded growth in prison spending. The reforms in House Bill 1176, to be signed at a ceremony at the Capitol, are projected to save taxpayers \$264 million over the next five years.

<http://www.ajc.com/news/georgia-government/governor-to-sign-sweeping-1429614.html>

*The San Bernardino Sun*

#### **District Attorneys Protest Measure That Would End Death Penalty**

an Bernardino County District Attorney Michael Ramos was among fellow top prosecutors at the steps of the state Capitol on Tuesday voicing their opposition to a measure that aims to abolish California's death penalty.

The California District Attorneys Association, of which Ramos is past president, is opposed to the SAFE California Act, a November ballot measure that would replace the death penalty with the punishment of life in prison without parole.

The measure to abolish the death penalty official qualified for the November ballot on Monday.

If voters approve, 725 death row inmates would have their sentences converted to the new punishment, which would be the harshest that prosecutors could seek.

[http://www.sbsun.com/ci\\_20472688/district-attorneys-protest-measure-that-would-end-death](http://www.sbsun.com/ci_20472688/district-attorneys-protest-measure-that-would-end-death)

*Muscatine Journal*

### **Iowa Begins Protective Order Alert System**

Iowa has become one of a dozen states to notify domestic violence victims when protective orders have been issued to keep an abuser away from the victim.

Attorney General Tom Miller announced the program Tuesday, saying it's financed by a federal Department of Justice grant. Ongoing costs of \$160,000 come from a state program funded by fines and penalties assessed against criminals.

Domestic abuse victims now may sign up with the state and receive automated phone call or email notifications when courts issue a protective order. That includes notification of when an order is about to expire.

[http://muscatinejournal.com/news/state-and-regional/iowa/iowa-begins-protective-order-alert-system/article\\_4c0b6754-b1b5-50c9-b8dd-49159bba786c.html](http://muscatinejournal.com/news/state-and-regional/iowa/iowa-begins-protective-order-alert-system/article_4c0b6754-b1b5-50c9-b8dd-49159bba786c.html)

*The Baltimore Sun*

### **Gansler Pushes Supreme Court Appeal On DNA Ruling Attorney general seeks stay on ruling that limited post-arrest sampling**

Maryland Attorney General Douglas F. Gansler took a first step Tuesday toward an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court in a high-stakes case that blocks police across the state from collecting DNA samples when a person is arrested in connection with a violent crime or burglary.

Gansler asked Maryland's highest court to reconsider its recent ruling or allow police to continue to take the samples while the state asks the Supreme Court to step in. At issue is whether taking the samples before a conviction violates an individual's constitutional rights.

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/breaking/bs-md-dna-appeal-20120501,0,4604747.story>

*MLive*

## **Sex Offenders Could Lose Parental Rights Under Law Signed By Gov. Rick Snyder**

Gov. Rick Snyder signed a law on Tuesday that allows a family court to terminate parental rights for sex offenders. Senate Bill 1005, sponsored by Sen. Judy Emmons, R-Sheridan, passed both chambers unanimously.

Sex offenders could have lost parental rights if they violated certain portions of the existing juvenile code, but the amended law now explicitly includes a parent's requirement to register under the Sex Offenders Registration Act as a reason the family court may terminate a parent's parental rights.

The bill brings state law in line with federal guidelines as required by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Reauthorization Act of 2010.

The state had to make this and other clarifications to the juvenile code in order to qualify for about \$800,000 in federal funding for child abuse and neglect prevention activities, according to the Senate Fiscal Agency.

[http://www.mlive.com/politics/index.ssf/2012/05/sex\\_offenders\\_could\\_lose\\_paren.html](http://www.mlive.com/politics/index.ssf/2012/05/sex_offenders_could_lose_paren.html)

*Reuters*

## **Oklahoma Executes Man Sentenced To Death Twice**

A convicted Oklahoma killer who was spared execution once but asked for a new trial and was sentenced to death a second time was executed by lethal injection on Tuesday.

Michael B. Selsor, 57, was the 18th person executed in the United States this year and the third person executed in Oklahoma in 2012. He was pronounced dead at 6:06 p.m. local time (1106 GMT) at the state prison in McAlester, Oklahoma, a prison spokesman said.

He was executed for killing convenience store clerk Clayton Chandler on September 22, 1975, during an armed robbery in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Selsor was sentenced to death in 1976, but later that year the U.S. Supreme Court ruled Oklahoma's capital punishment law was unconstitutional and his sentence was modified to life in prison.

With Oklahoma's death penalty briefly in limbo, the state's criminal appeals court

decided in 1976 that former death row inmates whose sentences were modified would not face the death penalty again should they win new trials. The death penalty in Oklahoma was restored in 1977.

Selsor sought a new trial and received one in 1998. But again he was found guilty and sentenced to death.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/02/us-execution-oklahoma-idUSBRE84100I20120502>

*Atlanta Journal Constitution*

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Deal told *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* he will also sign an executive order continuing the work of a special council that studied the state's prison system and recommended sweeping changes to control unimpeded growth in prison spending. The reforms in House Bill 1176, to be signed at a ceremony at the Capitol, are projected to save taxpayers \$264 million over the next five years.

Years ago, Georgia was among the states leading the nation in tough-on-crime sentencing laws. But Georgia now joins a host of other states — including Texas, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina — that have enacted legislation to address soaring prison spending that was doing little to reform offenders. The legislation enjoyed extraordinary bipartisan support, with the final version being approved unanimously by both the House and Senate.

<http://www.ajc.com/news/georgia-government/governor-to-sign-sweeping-1429614.html>

*The New York Times*

### **With Green Beret Tactics, Combating Gang Warfare**

At first glance, the Brightwood neighborhood in this central New England city would seem to have little in common with war-torn villages in Iraq or Afghanistan.

But when two Massachusetts state troopers, Michael Cutone and Thomas Sarrouf, returned to their jobs here after deployments with a Green Beret unit in Iraq, they noticed troubling parallels.

Like the residents of Avghani, the small northern Iraqi town where the two had helped establish and train a local police force to combat insurgents, many families in Brightwood, a low-income, largely Puerto Rican neighborhood in the North End, lived in fear. Gang

members and drug dealers cruised the streets on motor scooters carrying SKS semiautomatic rifles in broad daylight. Gunfire erupted almost daily.

Perhaps the only sentiments that ran higher than the residents' fears were their apathy and distrust of the police, who swooped in to make arrests but did little to involve themselves in the community.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/01/us/springfield-mass-fights-crime-using-green-beret-tactics.html>



### **Upcoming Courses**

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