



17 September 2024

Texas Governor Greg Abbott  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 12428  
Austin, TX 78711-2428

Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles  
Attn: Chairman David Gutiérrez and Board Members  
8610 Shoal Creek Boulevard  
Austin, TX 78757

re: Robert Roberson, TDCJ #999442, Execution scheduled for October 17, 2024

Dear Governor Abbott, Chairman Gutiérrez, and Board Members,

As advocates concerned with protecting children by empowering parents through laws to respect and protect parental rights, we are deeply concerned with the pending execution of Robert Roberson, scheduled for October 17. Based on the many concerning injustices of his trial laid out below, we urgently request a postponement of his execution and a call for a new trial.

The death of a child is always a tragedy, and never to be taken lightly. When the death is caused by abuse by a parent, it is devastating. But even more devastating is when an innocent parent, suffering the natural loss of a child, stands falsely accused of causing that tragic death.

Mr. Roberson's conviction in the death of his daughter, Nikki, came at a time when a medical theory called "Shaken Baby Syndrome" fueled prosecutions all over the nation. In many instances, like in Roberson's, a single doctor testified to a triad of symptoms as indicative of willful abuse. And many parents were sentenced to life in prison, or given the death penalty, on the basis of this theory and this singular testimony alone.

Since that time, thousands of these cases have been overturned, and not one of those executions has taken place. The "Shaken Baby Syndrome" theory has been utterly debunked, the same triad of symptoms has been documented arising from naturally occurring causes time and time again. Thousands of innocent parents have been set free as further scientific evidence has rendered SBS theory bankrupt.

**Michael T. Ramey**, President • **William R. Wagner, Esq.**, Vice President  
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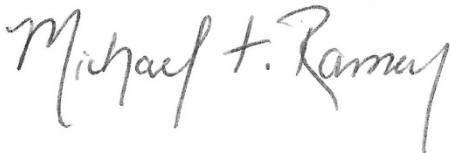
But it isn't only the medical theory that should be considered. In 2005, Roberson stood convicted on the testimony of just one doctor. This is itself an egregious miscarriage of justice which the Texas legislature and this governor have since remedied, through the passage of Texas Senate Bill 1578 in 2021. That law, inspired by medically fragile children like Nikki, gives parents accused of child abuse the right to have their own medical expert heard in their defense.

This law does not apply retroactively to Mr. Roberson. But it should. And while the legislature lacks the authority to make it so, you hold that authority in your hand.

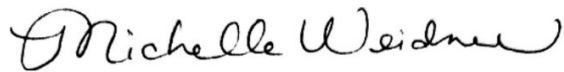
If, as Mr. Roberson claims, he is innocent of Nikki's death; if his little girl was very sick and he was denied any opportunity to care for her or be with her at the end of her short life due to false allegations; if he has spent nearly twenty years in prison, separated from the rest of his grieving family and loved ones, and the evidence that led to all of this depends so heavily on debunked science and a lack of other medical voices in the courtroom, then the least we owe him is a new trial, under the laws and scientific understandings we see as necessary today.

Respectfully, we the below signed urge you to issue a reprieve for Mr. Roberson and call for a new trial into his daughter's death.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael T. Ramey  
President  
Parental Rights Foundation



Michelle Weidner  
Executive Director  
Family Justice Resource Center