Richard C. Dieter
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1015 18th St. NW,
Suite 704
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: (202) 289-2275
FAX: (202) 289-7336
dpic@deathpenaltyinfo.org
www.deathpenaltyinfo.org

DEATH PENALTY INFORMATION CENTER

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CONTACT: Margot Friedman at 202-332-5550
mfriedman@dupontcirclecommunications.com

OHIO EXONERATES FORMER DEATH ROW INMATE 39 YEARS AFTER CONVICTION

Ricky Jackson Becomes the Fifth Person Freed in 2014

Washington D.C. – On November 19, 2014, Ohio Judge Richard McMonagle dismissed all charges against Ricky Jackson, who had been convicted and sentenced to death for murder in 1975. District Attorney Terrence McGinty concurred with the judge, saying, "The state is conceding the obvious." Jackson and two other men had been convicted on the basis of a 12-year-old's testimony that has since been recanted and discredited. The other two defendants are also asking for a dismissal of charges.

Jackson is the fifth person to be exonerated in 2014 after being sentenced to death and the 148th person since 1973, according to the Death Penalty Information Center's (DPIC) innocence list. Ohio has had seven exonerations from death row.

Richard Dieter, DPIC's Executive Director, said, "If the country needed any more reminders of the risks inherent in the death penalty, the release this year of five more inmates who had been sentenced to death should be the final wake-up call. But for unrelated changes in the law and the conscience of one supposed witness, three innocent men might have been executed just in this most recent case. Such mistakes can and will continue as long as capital punishment is in use."

Also exonerated this year were Glenn Ford in Louisiana, Carl Dausch in Florida, and Leon Brown and Henry McCollum in North Carolina. These inmates were imprisoned an average of 26 years prior to their release, including years on death row.

Ohio halted all executions this year after the botched execution of Dennis McGuire in January. The state is currently considering legislation to make the sources of its execution drugs a secret and to hide the identity of medical personnel participating

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in executions. Ohio has carried out 53 executions since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976 and has scheduled seven executions for 2015.

In order to be included on DPIC's Exoneration List, defendants must have been convicted, sentenced to death, and subsequently either (a) acquitted of all charges related to the crime that placed them on death row, (b) had all charges related to the crime dismissed by the prosecution, or (c) granted a complete pardon based on innocence, since 1973.

To speak with Richard Dieter, DPIC's Executive Director, call 202-289-4022, or email at <dpic@deathpenaltyinfo.org>.

The Death Penalty Information Center (www.deathpenaltyinfo.org) is a non-profit organization serving the media and the public with analysis and information on issues concerning capital punishment. DPIC was founded in 1990 and prepares in-depth reports, issues press releases, conducts briefings for the media, and serves as a resource to those working on this issue.