



## Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault Statement on Capital Punishment and Clemency for Lisa M. Montgomery

The Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault is opposed to all forms of violence, including the violence of capital punishment. Our mission to end sexual violence is part of a broader movement to eradicate all forms of violence. We know that violence is often cyclical. While not true in every case, many people who are convicted of and imprisoned for violent crimes are victims/survivors of violence and abuse themselves. In many cases, the victim/survivor who is being held accountable as a perpetrator also suffered significant—and often repetitive—harm and the system failed to intervene and interrupt that harm.

Opposing capital punishment is not about excusing harm. It is about acknowledging how the system's failure to prevent harm and protect victims/survivors contributes to a cycle of violence. Rather than answering a cycle of violence with the violence of capital punishment, we envision a society where those who cause harm can work toward repairing that harm.

In line with this vision, we urge clemency for Lisa M. Montgomery, who is set to be executed on January 12, 2021, and other incarcerated victims/survivors of sexual violence on death row. Lisa M. Montgomery is a victim of child sex trafficking, sexual exploitation, and abuse. The system failed to protect Lisa and those who harmed her were not held accountable.

Lisa committed a horrible crime, for which she has been convicted. But, victims/survivors do not have to be perfect people to deserve justice and compassion, and we will never end sexual violence if we only recognize the humanity of some victims/survivors.

Lisa can never undo what she did. However, ending Lisa's life will not make our society better. Instead, we urge those with power to give victims/survivors like Lisa M. Montgomery an opportunity to repair harm.

Lisa's case is an important one, but hers is just one example of how violent trauma and systemic failure contribute to cycles of violence. If we want to disrupt that violence, we need to start by addressing the gaps within our system that allow for someone like Lisa to be severely and repeatedly harmed and for those who perpetrate that harm to not face consequences. The Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault opposes capital punishment as part of our

work to end sexual violence and advocate for all victims/survivors.

## Take Action for Lisa M. Montgomery

1. Share Lisa's story on social media during the #SaveLisa Final Power Hour **today from 12pm-2pm CT**. Access the social media toolkit here: <https://bit.ly/2XnZBeW>
2. Sign the petition demanding clemency for Lisa: <http://ow.ly/uwPV30rsaGM>

*If you have questions about this press release, please contact Lauren Rimestad, MNCASA Communications and Development Director at [lrimestad@mncasa.org](mailto:lrimestad@mncasa.org).*