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The Honorable Greg Abbott  
The Governor of Texas  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles  
Clemency Section  
8610 Shoal Creek Boulevard  
Austin, TX 78757

Re: Andre Thomas, scheduled for execution April 5, 2023

Dear Governor Abbott, Chairman Gutiérrez, and Members of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles:

As Christians, we believe that our justice system should be used to help our society flourish. Each person is made in God's image, which makes all life sacred, and therefore all life is due the dignity of a natural end. We urge you to honor this culture of life by showing mercy toward Andre Thomas and granting him clemency.

Mr. Thomas suffers from schizophrenia, which led him to horrific acts of self-mutilation throughout his time in prison. He is indisputably one of the most severely mentally ill incarcerated individuals in Texas history. Clemency would allow for Mr. Thomas to be kept in a secure psychiatric prison facility for the rest of his life, in order to receive the care he desperately needs.

Our prayers are with the families of the victims of this tragic crime: Mr. Thomas' estranged wife, Laura Boren; their son Andre; and her daughter, Leyha Hughes. Yet we believe that the answer to violence is not further violence. This is especially true when the violence occurred, as it did in Mr. Thomas' case, in a state of active psychosis and after a lifetime of extreme mental illness.

Had Mr. Thomas received the intervention and treatment he so badly needed – as a boy or young man – events would have unfolded differently. We applaud your state's work to improve mental health services in Texas and to make improvements in mental health training for law enforcement officers, but sadly these changes came too late to help Mr. Thomas.

Allowing Mr. Thomas to be executed – in his permanently disabled, mentally incompetent, and vulnerable state – would serve no useful purpose other than pure vengeance, which we believe is not something Christians can or should pursue. Not repaying evil for evil (Romans 12:17) and turning the other cheek (Matthew 5:39) mean breaking the cycle of violence.

We pray that you, rather than perpetuating further violence, will choose a path that offers healing, closure, and grace to all by sparing Andre Thomas' life.

Thank you for your leadership.

In Christ,

**Walter Kim**, president, National Association of Evangelicals

**Kelly Rosati**, CEO of KMR Consulting and former vice president of community outreach for Focus on the Family

**Paul Basden**, co-senior pastor, Preston Trail Community Church, Frisco, TX

**Karen Swanson**, director, Correctional Ministries Institute, Wheaton College Billy Graham Center, IL

**Shane Claiborne**, author & co-founder of Red Letter Christians

**Aaron Griffith**, author of *God's Law & Order*, professor at Whitworth University

**Demetrius Minor**, national manager, Conservatives Concerned about the Death Penalty

**Lisa Sharon Harper**, author of *The Very Good Gospel* and founder/president of Freedom Road

**Michelle Ferrigno Warren**, president & CEO Virago Strategies and former advocacy & strategic engagement director at the Christian Community Development Association

**Fisher Humphreys**, professor of divinity, emeritus, Samford University, Birmingham, AL