

Life for Jeffery Lee: A Joint Strategy

How can we do this work in coalition, together? **Multiply** the impact of events and actions by partnering together, sharing the same message, and uplifting others' work, rather than **duplicate** the work another individual/group has already done.

Core Narrative:

- **Judicial Override: The jury voted for life. Alabama plans to execute him anyway.**
 - It flies in the face of democracy to allow a judge to impose a death sentence after a jury voted for life in prison without parole. Judicial override was a dangerous overreach of government which allowed a single elected official to disregard a twelve-member jury's determination.
 - A system that permits elected officials to impose death after citizens chose life risks creating the appearance that political pressure – rather than thoughtful deliberation – shaped the outcome.
 - A jury from Mr. Lee's community heard the evidence, deliberated, and decided the appropriate sentence was life without parole. Allowing one elected official to erase the jury's determination weakens the constitutional role of the jury and undermines public confidence in law, order, and the integrity of Alabama's courts.
- **Second Execution Date: When the State loses, it changes the rules.**
 - In 2018, the State agreed to dismiss Mr. Lee's lethal injection lawsuit in exchange for never using lethal injection to execute him. In 2026, two federal courts struck down Alabama's nitrogen hypoxia protocol as unconstitutionally cruel.
 - Having lost twice in federal court, Alabama is now reviving the very method it swore off: lethal injection. The State is not interested in abiding by prior legal agreements or revising their execution protocols to ensure that individuals are not tortured to death. In their rush to execute Mr. Lee, the State is willing to evade legal agreements, due process, and examination of the very lethal injection protocol responsible for numerous botched executions.
 - This framing is strategically useful because it's not "the state is cruel," which invites a pro/anti-death-penalty debate — **it's a rule-of-law argument that can reach people regardless of their views on capital punishment itself.**

- **Execution Under Discarded Law:** Continuing to execute people under a discarded law means the time of conviction, not the crime itself is the reason for the execution.
 - In 2017, Alabama abolished judicial override because the State recognized that allowing judges to override juries in capital cases undermined confidence in the fairness and reliability of the death penalty.
 - But the law was not made retroactive, so 25 people remain on death row today even though their juries voted for life.
 - Jeffery Lee has transformed over the years and so too has Alabama's judicial override law. Both demonstrate that it is never too late to change and do what is right.

Key Pressure Points:

- **Legislative pressure:** Lawmakers who voted to abolish judicial override in 2017 are natural allies — invite them to publicly state that Lee's case is exactly what they meant to prevent, and that the State is now compounding that old injustice with a new one (breaking its own promise on method).
- **Legal community voices:** Retired judges, former prosecutors, and bar members can speak to the "outrunning the Constitution" framing with credibility — this argument lands harder from lawyers than from advocates.
- **Faith community mobilization:** Lee's work as a Kairos ministry leader and chaplain gives you a built-in messenger network across Alabama congregations.

Shareable Content Ideas:

- Social graphics/short video: A simple timeline graphic — 2018: promised no lethal injection → 2024–2026: nitrogen struck down twice → 2026: lethal injection revived anyway — makes the "outrunning" argument visually obvious without needing a caption to explain it.
- Petition headline: "Tell Alabama: Stop Outrunning the Law — Grant Clemency to Jeffery Lee." This keeps the ask about fairness and consistency, not just mercy.
- Press pitch: Reporters covering courts and justice reform respond well to a "state changes the rules every time it loses" angle — it's a stronger hook than a standard clemency appeal.

Direct Actions:

- Petition drive with a deadline tied to any execution date, using the "outrunning the law" headline.
- Vigils/rallies timed to court filings or a set execution date, featuring faith leaders and legal voices.
- Call-in/write-in campaign to the Governor's office and relevant legislators (using the call script already drafted).
- Op-eds for legislators, retired judges, or faith leaders placed in Alabama outlets (AL.com, Montgomery Advertiser), built around the same central frame so the message compounds across channels.

Documentary Screening:

- Since the Governor has signaled she's unlikely to grant clemency, the documentary's real audience may end up being wider than her office — legislators, faith communities, media, and the public building sustained pressure. Used that way, it works best:
 - Released after the factual groundwork (graphic, petition, call script) is circulating, so people watching it already have the "why" and the video adds the "who."
 - Shared through the faith and legal-community channels already identified, since those audiences respond strongly to character testimony.
 - Paired with a caption that includes the petition/call-to-action link, so an emotional reaction converts into the same concrete action (call, sign, share) as the rest of the campaign.