

Dying inmate seeks stay

By Jay Reeves
The Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM — A quadruple murderer who is dying of cancer has asked courts to block his execution later this month, arguing that lethal chemicals that would be used to kill him could interact with his medication and cause undue pain.

Daniel Lee Siebert, 53, has filed papers asking federal and state courts to block his execution in part because of the possible drug reaction. He also is challenging lethal injection as cruel and unusual punishment even without the alleged pain from the chemical mix.

A federal judge gave the state until

the close of business Friday to reveal whether it plans to go through with the execution of Siebert. Gov. Bob Riley's staff told the attorney general's office to inform the court he was undecided on whether to grant a stay.

"The governor, I guess, can withhold a decision until the day of the execution," said Clay Crenshaw, an assistant attorney general.

Riley issued a temporary stay of execution last month for convicted killer Tommy Arthur to allow time for new lethal injection procedures to be put in place in Alabama. The execution method is being challenged nationwide, and the Supreme Court has agreed to review Kentucky's execution procedures, which are similar to Alabama's.

Court documents indicate Siebert has been suffering since at least June and possibly earlier from pancreatic cancer, which can spread quickly and cause death within weeks. He also has hepatitis C, documents show.

Siebert refused treatment for the cancer and is receiving only pain medication, said Crenshaw. The inmate has signed papers to waive resuscitation or other efforts to prolong his life as his condition worsens, Crenshaw said.

Siebert's execution is set for Oct. 25.

"He will die in a matter of months no matter what happens at the end of this month," Crenshaw said.

Attorneys for Siebert did not return messages seeking comment.

Siebert was sentenced to death in two separate cases involving four murders.

Sherri Weathers, a 24-year-old student at the state's school for the deaf in Talladega, was strangled along with her two sons, 4-year-old Joey and 5-year-old Chad, on Feb. 19, 1986. Siebert and Weathers had been dating.

Siebert, an art teacher before his arrest, was also convicted of capital murder in the death of Linda Jarman, a neighbor of Weathers, who was killed the same night.

While in prison, Siebert has drawn pictures that are for sale on several Internet sites.