

This is a printer friendly version of an article from the **The Montgomery Advertiser**
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back](#)

Riley won't grant execution delay

By Phillip Rawls
The Associated Press

October 23, 2007

Gov. Bob Riley said Monday the crimes of a confessed serial killer were so brutal that the state won't delay his scheduled execution Thursday, even though he is months away from dying with pancreatic cancer.

Riley said the state Department of Corrections has completed changes in its lethal injection procedures and will prepare to execute Daniel Lee Siebert at 6 p.m. Thursday.

Alabama officials keep secret the details of how they carry out the state's ultimate punishment, but Riley said new safeguards will make sure inmates are unconscious when they receive the drugs that stop their lungs and heart.

Death penalty opponents have urged Riley to spare Siebert because he has terminal cancer and would die in a few months if not executed.

"I would in essence be commuting his sentence to life in prison, and that is not the sentence he was given by the jury. His crimes were monstrous, brutal and ghastly," Riley said in a statement.

Esther Brown of Lanett, executive director of Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty, said she was shocked the governor would go ahead with the execution of an inmate who has already lost lots of weight and turned yellow from the pancreatic cancer.

"I find it unbelievable that Alabama justice demands we strap a dying man to the gurney," she said Monday.

On Sept. 27, Riley issued a stay of execution for convicted killer Thomas Arthur the same day he was scheduled to die at Holman Prison in Atmore. Riley issued the 45-day stay to allow time for the Department of Corrections to make changes in Alabama's execution procedures, including using more than just observation to make sure the condemned inmate is unconscious. That includes calling the condemned inmate's name, brushing the eye lashes and possibly pinching the person, Assistant Attorney General Clay Crenshaw said Monday.

Siebert, 53, was sentenced to death for the Feb. 19, 1986, strangulation deaths of Sherri Weathers, 24, and her two sons, 5-year-old Chad and 4-year-old Joey.

Weathers was a student at the Alabama School for the Deaf in Talladega and had been dating Siebert. The bodies were found in her Talladega apartment several days after the three were killed.

Siebert also was convicted of capital murder in the death of Linda Jarman, a neighbor of Weathers, who was killed the same night.

Siebert was linked to other crimes inside and outside Alabama.

"This guy has a lot of murders all across the country that he has not been prosecuted for but that he has confessed to," Crenshaw said.

Attorneys for Siebert did not immediately return phone calls seeking comment.

They have asked federal and state courts to block his execution on grounds the drugs used to kill him could interact with his medication and cause undue pain. They also are challenging lethal injection as cruel and unusual punishment even without the alleged pain from the drug mix.

Riley's announcement Monday came after U.S. District Judge Mark Fuller issued an order Wednesday saying he needed to know whether the state's old or new execution procedures would be used for Siebert and whether the governor was going to delay Siebert's execution date like he did Arthur's.