



**Quixote Center**

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## **Prosecutors Investigate Possible Execution of an Innocent Man**

*Quixote Center applauds Missouri Circuit Attorney Jennifer Joyce for reopening investigation of Larry Griffin; calls for national halt to executions*

Missouri prosecutor Jennifer Joyce announced yesterday that she would reopen the case of Larry Griffin, who was executed in 1995 for the drive-by shooting of Quintin Moss. Joyce told the Associated Press yesterday that attorneys for the victim's family along with the NAACP Legal and Educational Fund approached her with new evidence in the case, and that she was particularly moved that family members of the victim had also expressed concern that the wrong person was executed.

"Jennifer Joyce's decision to reopen the case of Larry Griffin is a rare and refreshing display of justice over politics," said Shari Silberstein, Co-Director of the Quixote Center, a national faith-based organization calling for a moratorium on executions. "Too often, we hear stories of prosecutors who hide evidence or refuse to acknowledge new evidence that might exonerate an innocent person. But events in Missouri remind us that there are principled people on all sides of the death penalty system. We congratulate Jennifer Joyce for seeking the truth, no matter how painful."

"Sadly, Larry Griffin's case exemplifies many of the problems plaguing other death penalty cases around the country," said Silberstein. "Problems with incompetent defense lawyers, improper investigation, and shaky eyewitness testimony are hardly unique. If Griffin is exonerated, Americans will face the horrifying truth that the U.S. executed an innocent man."

"Americans want an immediate moratorium on executions while the death penalty's flaws are studied and addressed," Silberstein continued. "A system that is unfairly applied will continue to send innocent people to their death. No one can live with that."

The Quixote Center profiled Larry Griffin's case in its October 2000 report, "Reasonable Doubts: Is the U.S. Executing Innocent People?" The report featured 16 cases of people who had been executed despite compelling doubts about their guilt and is available at [www.ejusa.org](http://www.ejusa.org).

The Quixote Center is a national organization founded in 1976. The Center's Equal Justice USA program pioneered the national grassroots movement for a moratorium on executions in 1997. Nationwide, over 3,700 national and local groups, businesses, and faith communities have called for a halt to executions, including 143 local governments. (For a complete listing, see the *National Tally* at <http://www.ejusa.org>).

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