

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.acluohio.org/en/news/will-next-execution-be-botched-last>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

[Skip to main content](#)

At this point, we do not know. But we do know that its a gamble the State of Ohio is willing to take, as officials recently released the revised [execution schedule](#) for the next two years.

In April, we urged Governor John Kasich to [pause executions](#) through the end of 2015 so that courts and experts could take the time needed to ensure that lethal injections do not amount to cruel and unusual punishment. Despite our recommendation, Governor Kasich assigned 11 execution dates for 2015 and 2016.

More executions should not take place until new protocols have been properly vetted to ensure another execution does not result in a torturous death. The result of the experimental drug combination used in Dennis McGuire's lethal injection in January, leaving him writhing for more than 20 minutes, is reason enough to wait until substantial improvements are made before scheduling any more.

Dennis McGuire's death has not been the only botched execution in recent months in the U.S. In April, [Clayton Lockett's](#) Oklahoma execution was halted after the injection was administered, but not in time to stop the execution from causing undue pain and agony. In July, [Joseph Rudolph Wood III](#) spent more than 90 minutes thrashing in pain in an Arizona gurney after receiving a combination of lethal injection drugs. One would think that officials would take notice after 6 months worth of botched executions each using similar experimental cocktails of lethal injection drugs as Ohio used on Dennis McGuire.

While some have little sympathy for those sentenced to death, we must remember that our Constitution prohibits cruel and unusual punishment. If our society ignores its responsibility to dole out humane punishments, we lose our ability to stand in judgment over these individuals crimes.

Ohio officials must stop experimenting with lives, and take time to work harder toward establishing the protocols needed to provide more transparency and accountability. We cannot hurry death row inmates along to their fates before ensuring that they will be met in a fair, humane way. Instead, Ohio should set an example by leading other states in establishing an execution policy that does not experiment with individuals lives.

Stay informed

2022 ACLU of Ohio