

## Tookie Williams Support Reaches Well Beyond Hip-Hop and Rap

Written by Robert ID2169

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Hip-hop culture grass roots organizers, rappers, actors, and politicians are not the only people standing up for clemency for Stan 'Tookie' Williams, co-founder of the LA street gang the Crips.

Recently rap artists Snoop Dogg lead a rally outside of San Quentin for clemency and a host of hip-hop and rap artists have come together to craft Redemption - Hip Hop United 2 Save Stan "Tookie" Williams.

The album highlights hip-hop and rap talents like stic.man (of dead prez), P.O.W., Paris, Kam, Shorty (of Da Lenchmob), WC, Tank, RBX, Kid Frost, Gangsta Ridd of the Boo Ya Tribe), Frontline and others.

Religious Leaders are now strongly urging clemency for Stanley 'Tookie' Williams.

Ten interdenominational religious leaders, representing more than 27 million worshippers, have asked California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to grant clemency for Stanley Tookie Williams, who is scheduled to be executed by intravenous injection December 13, 2005.

The Rev. Julius Hope, NAACP Director of Religious Affairs, said, "These leaders bring with them the prayers of their membership resulting in 27 million more voices crying in the wilderness, in the hope that Governor Schwarzenegger will bring about a positive and well deserved decision to show mercy and grant clemency to Mr. Williams."

In a letter to Schwarzenegger signed by the faith leaders, Hope said, "For those who believe that the State killing of Stanley Williams today would in anyway be fulfilling justice would mean the forever denying of forgiveness, or the recognition of human beings to grow, learn and change."

The religious leaders said they are "keenly aware of the adverse effects of crime in today's society." However, they said, "we also understand that the price cannot be paid or satisfied by the death of someone who has made contributions to reach out to those habitually forgotten

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individuals whom society does not pay attention or invest in until they are caught up in an ugly vicious cycle of survival."

Moreover, they said, "We are not requesting, nor seeking to send a message that criminal actions or behavior will be tolerated, nevertheless it is important to send a message to those who have been not only incarcerated, but also find themselves to have made poor decisions in the past that forgiveness involves changing your behavior and improving of your character."

The leaders said Williams, "through his writings and efforts has made great strides to demonstrate positive change. He has openly expressed remorse for his actions and asked for forgiveness." They noted that five times Williams was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and four times for the Nobel Prize in Literature for books that seek to deter young people from violence and gangs.

The letter was signed by Dr. Major L. Jemison, President, Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc.; Reverend Stephen J. Thurston, President, The National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.; Dr. Melvin von Wade, President, National Missionary Baptist Convention of America; Senior Bishop Marshall Gilmore, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church; Bishop Philip Robert Cousin, Senior Bishop, African Methodist Episcopal Church Fourth Episcopal District; Bishop George W. C. Walker, Senior Bishop, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; Bishop Floyd E. Perry, Board Member, Church of God In Christ; the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan, The Nation of Islam; and Rabbi David N. Saperstein, Vice Chairman Religious Action Committee of Reform Judaism Director and Council.

"The granting of clemency in this matter will reach far beyond San Quentin, into the community sending a positive message to the youth across this nation that if you fall down you can get up and there are people willing to give them a second opportunity to do the right thing," the religious leaders said.

Hope said, "Who is better to plead for the life of a human being than learned theologians who understand that God gives life and no man has the right to take what God has so graciously given."

Founded in 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is the

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nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Its half-million adult and youth members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities and monitor equal opportunity in the public and private sectors.