

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For more information

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P R E S S A D V I S O R Y

Governor Bill Richardson, Former Attorney General John Van de Kamp, and Former San Quentin Warden Jeanne Woodford to be honored for opposing the death penalty

What: Death Penalty Focus's 18th Annual Awards Dinner

When: Thursday, May 21, 2009. Program to begin at 7:15pm. Press availability for Mike Farrell, Gov. Bill Richardson, John Van de Kamp, Jeanne Woodford, Bryan Stevenson, and Nick McKeown from 6:00-6:30pm.

Where: Universal Studios Globe Theater, 100 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, CA 91608

Who: New Mexico Governor **Bill Richardson**, Former Attorney General **John Van De Kamp**, Former San Quentin Warden **Jeanne Woodford**, TV Producer **Nancy Miller** (*Saving Grace*), legendary attorney and activist **Bryan Stevenson**, philanthropist and co-founder of UC Berkeley's Death Penalty Clinic **Nick McKeown**, Actress **Amy Brenneman** (*Private Practice*, *Judging Amy*), Actor **James Cromwell** (*The Queen*, *Babe*, *Six Feet Under*), and Actor **Mike Farrell** (*M*A*S*H*, *Providence*).

Background:

On May 21st, Death Penalty Focus, one of the largest non-profit organizations committed to public education on the death penalty, with more than 25,000 supporters nationwide, will be honoring individuals who have contributed significantly to shaping the public debate on the death penalty in recent years.

New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson recently signed historic legislation replacing the death penalty with permanent imprisonment, making his the 15th state without a death penalty. John Van De Kamp served as the Chair of the bi-partisan California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice from 2005-2008. The Commission's report called California's death penalty system "dysfunctional."

Mike Farrell, President of Death Penalty Focus, said "Public opinion has shifted dramatically on the issue of the death penalty in the last few years, with recent polls indicating that more Americans prefer permanent imprisonment to the death penalty. It is only a matter of time before many others follow in New Jersey and New Mexico's footsteps. More than ten states are now considering legislation to repeal the death penalty."

For more information on the event, please visit:

<http://www.deathpenalty.org/article.php?list=type&type=31>

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