

ATTACHMENT A

The below organizations have reviewed the discretionary appeals and requests for original proceedings filed by Sir Mario Owens and Robert Ray (13SA161 and 13SA162) which were denied without an opinion on September 5, 2013. We respectfully encourage the Colorado Supreme Court to reconsider its decision not to address the issues contained within these appeals because they are of great public importance.

Public access to judicial records furthers not only the interests of the general public, but also the integrity of the judicial system. The right to public access promotes trust in the judicial process, curbs potential judicial and governmental abuses, and provides the public with a more complete understanding of the judicial system, including a better perception of how it promotes fairness and justice.

The complete sealing of all transcripts, all exhibits, and the registries of actions in the *Owens* and *Ray* cases is not consistent with a free and open society, and threatens basic and fundamental liberties. Allowing these cases to remain cloaked in secrecy and hidden from public review and scrutiny will undermine public confidence in both the government and the judicial process. That such sealing and secrecy has been imposed in capital cases where there are substantial claims of serious government misconduct will further undermine societal trust in its institutions.

The public interest demands that matters involving the government's decision to execute two of its citizens be transparent and open. Public confidence cannot be maintained if our government and judicial system operate behind closed doors.

We therefore respectfully ask the Court to reconsider its order and address these important issues.

Signed,

Monica Owens
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
Colorado Press Association

Colorado Freedom of Information Coalition
Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press
First Amendment Coalition
Colorado Independent
Equal Justice Initiative
Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (CCJRC)
Colorado Innocence Project (CIP)
Center on Wrongful Convictions - Northwestern University Law
Georgia Innocence Project
Colorado Criminal Defense Bar (CCDB)
National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL)
Colorado for Alternatives to the Death Penalty (COADP)
The Colorado Prison Law Project