

Beat: Politics

## A JUST CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION!

### CCA Grants Stay for Jeff Wood

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**USPA NEWS** - Supporters of Jeff Wood, who was granted a stay of execution on his birthday Friday, just 5 days before the State of Texas was set to execute him for a crime he did not commit, gathered in Austin Sunday afternoon for a small celebration to commemorate Jeff's birthday and stay of execution.

Joining the party were Terri Been, Wood's sister, her husband Steven, and their family, including founding members of KADP [Kids Against the Death Penalty], Nathan, Nick, and Steven Been. Another notable face was Mark Clements, who came down from Chicago on Thursday to speak at the rally to deliver the petition signatures to the Governor. Thursday was also the 7 year anniversary of Clements exoneration and release from prison after 28 years of wrongful incarceration. His speech on the Capitol steps was especially evocative. You can follow Mark Clements on fb and twitter to see him in action as he speaks out against the death penalty, and gives a face to the prison reform movement.

While spirits were high over their seeming victory, there was an undercurrent of seriousness running through the crowd as everyone speculated on possible outcomes and discussed planning strategies for the fight to come. As one supporter toasted "...Well, the gauntlet has been thrown, it's time now to kick some ass!"

Lily Hughes, anti-death penalty activist and member of the board at the Campaign to End the Death Penalty, stated that she was suprised by the fact that the court ordered the stay of execution after the intensity of their campaign was so focused on the Governor and the BPP. She went on to talk about the hope that has been injected in the campaign with the additional support of prominent political figures.

During the champagne toast Wood's sister broke down as she thanked everyone for all their hard work on Jeff's behalf. "...I don't know where we would be without everyone in this room. You saved my brothers life".

A solemn singing of Happy Birthday to Jeff, with his nephew Nick Been, founding member of KADP blowing out the candle, was followed by the good, dirty fun of a food fight with the cake at Jeff's request before goodbyes were said, and all these disparate people, united by a common cause, returned home to continue fighting the good fight.

#### Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-8943/a-just-cause-for-celebration.html>

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