



UTAH BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLE

In the matter of RALPH LEROY MENZIES Offender #: 113858	COMMUTATION PETITION REVIEW Decision Date: 07/29/2025
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Offense	Sentence	Case #	Expiration
AGGRAVATED MURDER - CAPITAL FELONY	0 Yrs - 100 Yrs	CR86887	06/10/2086
AGGRAVATED KIDNAPPING - FIRST DEGREE FELONY	5 Yrs - 100 Yrs	CR86887	06/10/2086
ESCAPE FROM OFFICIAL CUSTODY - SECOND DEGREE FELONY	1 Yrs - 15 Yrs	CR78861	03/27/2091
AGGRAVATED ROBBERY - FIRST DEGREE FELONY	5 Yrs - 100 Yrs	CR78863	02/09/2079
AGGRAVATED ROBBERY - FIRST DEGREE FELONY	5 Yrs - 100 Yrs	29261	03/27/2076

After a review of the submitted information and good cause appearing, the Board of Pardons and Parole makes the following decision and order:

Schedule for a Hearing: COMMUTATION HEARING, Effective 08/2025

NOTICE

This decision is subject to review and modification by the Board of Pardons and Parole at any time while under Board jurisdiction.

The order of the Board continues on the following page(s).

ORDERED this 29th day of July, 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Blake R. Hills".

Blake Hills, Board Chair

BEFORE THE UTAH BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLE

IN THE MATTER OF:

COMMUTATION PETITION

RALPH LEROY MENZIES
OFFENDER #113858

ORDER

Request for Commutation

Pursuant to Utah Const. art. VII, § 12 and Utah Admin. Code R671-312A, a person sentenced to death may seek clemency relief from the Utah Board of Pardons and Parole (“the Board”). The only relief the Board is statutorily authorized to consider is the commutation of a death sentence to a sentence of life without the possibility of parole. *See* Utah Code Ann. § 77-27-9(2)(e) and (f).

Ralph Leroy Menzies was convicted of aggravated murder and sentenced to death on March 23, 1988. On July 9, 2025, the Court signed a warrant of execution for Mr. Menzies in case 031102598.

On July 16, 2025, Mr. Menzies, through counsel, filed a Petition for Commutation (“Petition”) with the Board seeking commutation of the sentence imposed in case 031102598, pursuant to Utah Const. art. VII, § 12.

On July 23, 2025, the State, through the Utah Attorney General’s Office, filed a Response in Opposition to Petition for Commutation (“Opposition”) with the Board.¹

The Board has carefully reviewed the Petition and supporting exhibits and the Opposition and supporting exhibits. After thorough consideration of the information submitted and, pursuant to Utah Const. art. VII, § 12, the Board grants the request for a hearing on the Petition. Accordingly, the Board will schedule a public commutation hearing on the Petition.

¹ Throughout its Opposition, the State cites to Utah Code Ann. § 77-27-5.5 as a controlling statute. The Board notes this statute does not apply to Mr. Menzies’s case as that statute was enacted in 1992, four years after Mr. Menzies was sentenced. *See Andrews v. Utah Bd. of Pardons*, 836 P.2d 790, 793 (Utah 1992) (explaining that Utah Code Ann. § 77-27-5.5 “created a new and higher substantive standard for obtaining a commutation hearing” which would violate “state and federal constitutional prohibitions of *ex post facto* laws” if applied to someone sentenced prior to the statute’s enactment).

Pursuant to Utah Admin. Code R671-312A-4(3), the Board will confer with the parties to schedule the date(s) of the hearing and to clarify the scope of the issues that may be addressed.

At the hearing on the Petition, Mr. Menzies and the State may call witnesses. Neither Mr. Menzies nor the State will be permitted to cross-examine witnesses. The Board will provide an opportunity for victim representatives to provide testimony at the hearing.

Notice of Mental Condition:

Contemporaneously with the Petition, Mr. Menzies filed a Notice of Mental Condition Related to Competency for Ralph Leroy Menzies (“Notice”) with the Board. In the Notice, Mr. Menzies asserts he is not competent under Utah Admin. Code R671-206-1. Mr. Menzies requests the Board initiate proceedings to determine if Mr. Menzies is competent pursuant to Utah Admin. Code R671-206-3.

The State filed a Response to Menzies’s Notice of Mental Condition Related to Competency (“Response”). In the Response, the State asserts that (1) because there is no right to commutation consideration, there is no constitutional requirement that Mr. Menzies be competent to proceed with a hearing; (2) the Board’s administrative rule does not apply to death penalty cases; and (3) Mr. Menzies’s counsel is attempting to hinder or delay the commutation process.

The Board has carefully reviewed and considered the Notice, the Response, and all the other submitted materials in support and opposition to the Petition – including the June 6, 2025, Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order in case 031102598. The June 6, 2025, Order makes detailed findings about Mr. Menzies’s ability to recall facts, his ability to use reason and logic, his understanding of the legal process – including the role of the Board – and his ability to generate ideas to problem solve. Though Mr. Menzies’s vascular dementia diagnosis is uncontroverted, the trial court nevertheless found Mr. Menzies competent to be executed.

Based on the trial court’s findings and conclusions about Mr. Menzies’s abilities, the Board does not find a sufficient basis to order additional reports pursuant to Utah Admin. Code R671-206-3. The Board also notes that, even if it found Mr. Menzies incompetent pursuant to Utah Admin. Code R671-206-1, the remedy would be to appoint counsel or a lay representative to assist Mr. Menzies with the hearing. *See* Utah Code Ann. § 77-27-7.1 (explaining that if the Board “determines that an offender . . . is unable, due to physical, mental, or other circumstances, to meaningfully participate in a board hearing or other board proceeding, the board may appoint, at the board’s own expense, legal counsel or a lay representative to assist the offender”). Since Mr. Menzies is already represented by counsel, there is no additional remedy available for Mr. Menzies. Accordingly, the Board denies the request to initiate a competency inquiry pursuant to Utah Admin. Code R671-206.