

12/23/02

Statement regarding the commutation of sentence for Deanna Wade:

- Too many Mississippians have faced the tragedy of domestic violence; too many lives have been affected, too many lives destroyed. Families have suffered.
- Deanna Wade was a victim of domestic violence. She was in an abusive relationship and defended her life against her attacker, who was violently drunk.
- In Mississippi, we have the right to bear arms and a right to defend ourselves.
- Several Supreme Court Justices stated that if any case was ever self-defense, this case was it.
- Former Justice Mike Mills (now a federal judge), who voted with the majority on the first appeal, dissented in the second, saying: “The judge and jury got it wrong. The facts of this case support a verdict of self-defense...”
- Deanna has served a substantial portion of her sentence and has an exemplary record of good behavior.
- It is time for her to return to her elderly parents and her ten-year-old son.
- Ms. Wade is supported overwhelmingly by her church and her pastor and may other pastors of the Pentecostal Church, as well as law enforcement officials from her home in Jones County.

Background on domestic violence:

- In 2002, I signed Senate Bill 2409 and Senate Bill 2460 and Senate Bill 2603, three important pieces of legislation addressing domestic violence.