IN THE SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA

CASE NO.SC07-2138

MARK DEAN SCHWAB,

Appellant,

V. Signed Execution Stayed

STATE OF FLORIDA

Appellee.

ON APPEAL FROM THE CIRCUIT COURT
OF THE EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT FOR BREVARD COUNTY,
STATE OF FLORIDA

NOTICE OF SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITY

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COMES NOW, the Appellant, Mark Dean Schwab, by and through undersigned counsel pursuant to Fla.R.App.P. 9.225, and submits this Notice of Supplemental Authority.

Baze v. Rees, (No. 07-5439) (transcript of oral argument heard before the United States Supreme Court on January 7, 2008).

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true copy of the foregoing Notice of Supplemental Authority has been furnished by U.S. Mail, first class postage, to Kenneth Nunnely, Office of the Attorney General, 444 Seabreeze Blvd., 5th Floor, Daytona Beach, FL 32118 3958 on this 7 day of February, 2008.

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1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE	UNITED STATES
2		x
3	RALPH BAZE AND THOMAS C.	:
4	BOWLING,	:
5	Petitioners	:
6	v.	: No. 07-5439
7	JOHN D. REES, COMMISSIONER,	:
8	KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF	r
9	CORRECTIONS, ET AL.	:
10		x
11	Washing	ton, D.C.
12	Monday,	January 7, 2008
13		
14	The above-entitl	ed matter came on for oral
15	argument before the Supreme Co	ourt of the United States
16	at 10:03 a.m.	
17	APPEARANCES:	
18	DONALD B. VERRILLI, JR., ESQ.,	Washington, D.C.; on
19	Behalf of the Petitioners.	
20	ROY T. ENGLERT, JR., ESQ., Was	hington, D.C.; on
21	Behalf of the Respondents.	
22	GREGORY G. GARRE, ESQ., Deputy	Solicitor General,
23	Department of Justice, Wash	aington, D.C.; on behalf
24	of the United States, as am	nicus curiae, supporting
25	the Respondents.	

1	CONTENTS	
2	ORAL ARGUMENT OF	PAGE
3	DONALD B. VERRILLI, JR., ESQ.	
4	On behalf of the Petitioners	3
5	ROY T. ENGLERT, JR., ESQ.	,
. 6	On behalf of the Respondents	26
7	GREGORY G. GARRE, ESQ.	
8	On behalf of the United States, as amicus	
9	curiae, supporting the Respondents	45
10	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF	
11	DONALD B. VERRILLI, JR., ESQ.	
12	On behalf of the Petitioners	54
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(10:03 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument
4	first this morning in the Case 07-5439, Baze v. Rees.
5	Mr. Verrilli.
6	ORAL ARGUMENT OF DONALD B. VERRILLI, JR.
7	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS
8	MR. VERRILLI: Mr. Chief Justice and may it
9	please the Court:
10	Kentucky's lethal injection procedures pose
11	a danger of cruelly inhumane executions. If the first
12	drug in the three-drug sequence, the anesthetic
13	thiopental, is not effectively administered to the
14	executed inmate, then the second drug, pancuronium, will
15	induce a terrifying conscious paralysis and suffocation
16	and the third drug, potassium chloride, will inflict an
17	excruciating burning pain as it courses through the
18	veins.
19	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Mr. Verrilli, your
20	argument is based on improper administration of the
21	protocol. You agree that if the protocol is properly
22	followed there is no risk of pain?
23	MR. VERRILLI: I disagree with that
24	respectfully, Mr. Chief Justice. The protocol simply
25	does not address several key steps where risks can arise

- and, beyond that, the protocol's -- and I think this is
- 2 critically important -- the protocol's procedures for
- 3 monitoring to assure that the inmate is adequately
- 4 anesthetized are practically nonexistent.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I thought your
- 6 expert -- I'm looking at page 493 to 494 of the joint
- 7 appendix -- agreed that if the two grams of sodium
- 8 pentothal is properly administered, the way he put it,
- 9 in virtually every case there would be a humane death.
- 10 MR. VERRILLI: That is true, but there can
- 11 be no guarantee that it will be properly administered
- 12 and that is because even in clinical settings there are
- 13 always -- there is always the potential for difficulty
- 14 which manifests itself in actual problems, for example
- in the setting of an IV.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, if it were properly
- 17 administered, would you have a case here? Let's assume
- 18 100 percent of cases are properly administered.
- 19 MR. VERRILLI: If there were a way to
- 20 guarantee that the procedure worked every time, then we
- 21 wouldn't have substantial risk.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: No, my question --
- MR. VERRILLI: But --
- 24 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Let's assume
- 25 hypothetically, and we know this isn't true, that 100

- 1 percent of the time it's properly administered. Then do
- 2 you have an argument to present to the Court?
- MR. VERRILLI: Well, if the "if" is, I
- 4 apologize for this, but for clarity -- the "if" is that
- 5 100 percent of the time the dose of anesthetic is
- 6 properly administered into the condemned inmate, then we
- 7 don't have a significant risk. Of course that is not
- 8 what the record in this case establishes. The record
- 9 establishes the contrary. There is -- you cannot assure
- 10 that there is going to be a guarantee of -- of
- 11 successful administration of the anesthetic. And that
- is why the monitoring part of the process is so
- 13 critical.
- 14 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But would you -- would
- 15 the monitoring suffice? In other words, you started out
- 16 by saying there is no way that it could be administered
- 17 and assure 100 percent against risk, so it would be
- 18 helpful if you clarified: Yes, there is a way of
- 19 monitoring adequately and tell us what that would be, or
- 20 no, there is no way.
- MR. VERRILLI: Yes, Justice Ginsburg. I
- 22 think we have tried to suggest in our brief that there
- 23 is a way to monitor effectively even with the three-drug
- 24 protocol. It's challenging. The key component of that
- 25 is that one needs a person trained in monitoring

- 1 anesthetic death to participate in the process.
- 2 JUSTICE SCALIA: Who would be a medical
- 3 doctor -- and medical doctors, according to the Code of
- 4 Ethics of the American Medical Association, can't
- 5 participate.
- 6 MR. VERRILLI: Well, Your Honor, of course,
- 7 that's why there is another practical alternative here,
- 8 which solves that problem, which is the single dose of
- 9 barbituate, which does not require the participation of
- 10 a medically trained professional.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, that seems to be a big
- 12 part your argument, but it doesn't appear that that
- 13 argument was raised at all in the Kentucky courts, and
- 14 it seems that there is virtually nothing in the record
- of this case that shows that that's practical or that
- 16 it's preferable to the three-drug protocol. It may well
- 17 be, but without anything in the record of this case, how
- 18 could we hold that the three drug protocol is
- 19 unconstitutional?
- MR. VERRILLI: Well, if I may Justice Alito,
- 21 I do think and I'd like to provide the references where
- 22 it is raised and then the evidentiary references that
- 23 support the argument --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Where was it raised? The
- 25 citations in the brief that was submitted by your

- 1 co-counsel are inaccurate to show that it was raised in
- 2 the Kentucky courts.
- MR. VERRILLI: Well, at page 684 of the
- 4 joint appendix, the -- this is the trial brief, the
- 5 brief raised in the trial court -- one assertion made
- 6 there is that an alternative chemical or combination of
- 7 chemicals that poses less risk of unnecessary pain and
- 8 suffering during an execution is --
- JUSTICE ALITO: No, that's -- that's the
- 10 trial court, and you think that just the word an
- 11 "alternative chemical poses less risk" is sufficient to
- 12 raise the argument that the three-drug protocol is
- unconstitutional, because a single drug protocol
- 14 involving thiopental is preferable. That one word?
- MR. VERRILLI: And then -- and then, no.
- 16 And then later, on page 701, the brief argues that there
- 17 are nonpainful ways of stopping the heart.
- 18 JUSTICE BREYER: What are they? That is, I
- 19 was -- I can't find -- what should I read? Because I've
- 20 read the studies. I've read that Lancet study, which
- 21 seemed to me the only referee for it said it wasn't any
- 22 good. And I've read the Zimmer study and I found in
- there an amazing sentence to me which says that The
- 24 Netherlands Information Task Force concluded it is not
- 25 possible to administer so much of it that a lethal

- 1 effect is guaranteed. They're talking about thiopental.
- 2 So I'm left at sea. I understand your contention. You
- 3 claim that this is somehow more painful than some other
- 4 method. But which? And what's the evidence for that?
- 5 What do I read to find it?
- 6 MR. VERRILLI: The thiopental is a
- 7 barbiturate and by definition will inflict death
- 8 painlessly. The record in this case establishes -- each
- 9 expert, the Petitioner's expert and Respondents' expert,
- 10 testified that it is guaranteed at the three gram dose
- 11 to cause death.
- JUSTICE BREYER: But that's what they're --
- 13 they're giving a three gram dose, I take it, and if --
- or two grams or three grams; I thought it was three
- 15 grams here. And I ended up thinking of course there is
- 16 a risk of human error. There is a risk of human error
- 17 generally where you're talking about the death penalty,
- 18 and this may be one extra problem, one serious
- 19 additional problem. But the question here is can we say
- 20 that there is a more serious problem here than with
- 21 other execution methods? I've read the studies. What
- 22 else should I read?
- MR. VERRILLI: Well, I think the record
- 24 references, which I think the record pretty clearly
- 25 establishes, Your Honor, that death is certain to occur

- 1 through the use of thiopental at the three gram dose.
- 2 JUSTICE BREYER: What do we do with the
- 3 euthanasia -- instead of talking -- I looked; I found it
- 4 more important to look at what they do with euthanasia
- 5 than to look at what they do with animals, frankly, and
- 6 I was therefore taken aback with the sentence I just
- 7 read to you. What am I supposed to do about that?
- 8 MR. VERRILLI: Well, I think to refer
- 9 instead to the expert testimony in this case which says
- 10 that death is certain to occur, and in addition, that
- 11 medical testimony in this case that it is certain to
- 12 occur in a very few minutes. Those are the transcript
- 13 references that we provided at page 18 of the reply
- 14 brief.
- 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: That method has
- 16 never been tried, correct.
- 17 MR. VERRILLI: Well, it has never been tried
- 18 on humans. That is correct. It is --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Do we know whether
- 20 there are risks of pain accompanying that method?
- MR. VERRILLI: I think you do, Mr. Chief
- Justice, because by definition, barbituates cannot
- 23 inflict pain and do not inflict pain.
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The record
- 25 establishes that the second drug that's used here is

- 1 used to prevent involuntary muscle contractions. That
- 2 would not be -- there wouldn't be a safequard against
- 3 that under one drug protocol, I take it.
- 4 MR. VERRILLI: Well, yes there would,
- 5 Mr. Chief Justice, because the reality is that
- 6 thiopental and other barbituates are anti-convulsives.
- 7 Their point is to -- among other things to suppress any
- 8 involuntary muscle --
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Can you -- do you
- 10 agree that that is an appropriate problem to be
- 11 addressed by the execution protocol, that they should
- 12 try to reduce the likelihood of involuntary muscle
- 13 contractions?
- MR. VERRILLI: No, because to the extent
- 15 that the reason that they are offering to do it, is
- 16 because of the potential for discomfort that it may
- 17 cause the audience given the risk that the --
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I think that their
- 19 -- one of their reasons was that it would enhance the
- 20 dignity, not only of the procedure as a whole, but also
- 21 to the condemned.
- MR. VERRILLI: I understand that, Mr. Chief
- 23 Justice, but given the extent to which it increases the
- 24 risk that there can be ineffective anesthesia, and it
- 25 can go undetected, it doesn't seem to us to be an

- 1 argument of sufficient force to justify using it despite
- 2 that risk particularly when it seems to us that the
- 3 issue of dignity can be addressed by communication with
- 4 the audience.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: What do we do with
- 6 the -- if you prevail here, and the next case is brought
- 7 by someone subject to the single drug protocol and their
- 8 claim is: Look this has never been tried. We do know
- 9 that there's a chance that it would cause muscle
- 10 contractions that would make my death undignified. It
- 11 will certainly extend how long it takes to die, so I'm
- 12 subject to a lingering death and the more humane
- 13 protocol would be the three drug protocol?
- MR. VERRILLI: Well, I think with respect to
- 15 the lingering death point, I think it would, this
- 16 Court's cases are talking about is the consciousness of
- 17 lingering death and the torture that that imposes, which
- 18 you wouldn't have of course in this situation. I don't
- 19 think there is a credible argument that the use of a
- 20 barbituate alone could inflict pain. They do not
- 21 inflict any pain. Now, of course there are
- 22 possibilities of maladministration, but not
- 23 maladministration of a one drug protocol that results in
- 24 any pain, and therefore there is just not a credible
- 25 Eight Amendment argument. It seems to me that it

- 1 couldn't be cruel and unusual punishment, because there
- 2' is no pain.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Verrilli, I think
- 4 that your main argument in this case, I mean, there's --
- 5 barbituate only seems to have come up rather late in the
- 6 day, as Justice Alito pointed out, but your main
- 7 arguments seem to be that the controls were inadequate.
- 8 So you were beginning to say what controls would be
- 9 necessary to render this procedure constitutional, and
- 10 one that you said -- trained personnel to monitor the
- 11 flow.
- 12 MR. VERRILLI: The monitor for anesthetic.
- 13 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Yes.
- 14 MR. VERRILLI: To ensure that anesthetic
- 15 depth has been achieved and maintained.
- 16 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And what is --
- 17 MR. VERRILLI: That is correct.
- 18 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Two questions: Who would
- 19 the trained personnel be? And, the second question,
- 20 what would be the measures that they would employ?
- 21 MR. VERRILLI: The trained personnel could
- 22 be a physician, a nurse or anyone trained by them
- 23 adequately in this process.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Well, what do we do about
- 25 the point -- the point that the doctors or the nurses

- 1 say it's unethical to help with an execution? I mean,
- 2 if we are going to talk about the constitutionality of
- 3 the death penalty per se, that isn't raised in this
- 4 case. And what the other side says is, well, you're
- 5 just trying to do this by the back door, insist upon a
- 6 procedure that can't be used.
- 7 MR. VERRILLI: Well, I think the one point
- 8 of the one-drug protocol, of course, is to demonstrate
- 9 that we are not doing that. Beyond that, it seems to me
- that the State can't have it both ways with respect to
- 11 the -- the issue of the participation of medically
- 12 trained personnel. On the one hand, they cannot say
- 13 that we have qualified medically able personnel
- 14 participating in this process and that's our guarantee
- of its efficacy, and on the other hand say a requirement
- of having trained qualified personnel participate is
- 17 impossible. And they do say that. For example the EMTs
- 18 that participate in Kentucky are under the same ethical
- 19 set of issues as doctors are.
- 20 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Could you use those EMTs?
- 21 Would they be qualified? Would the team that inserts
- the IV, would that team be qualified?
- MR. VERRILLI: With additional training they
- 24 could be qualified. They aren't qualified by virtue of
- 25 their training to become EMTs. They would have to be

- 1 additionally trained.
- 2 JUSTICE SOUTER: Mr. Verrilli, are we in the
- 3 difficult position in hearing your answers that, in
- 4 effect, we're being asked to make findings of fact about
- 5 the availability of medical personnel and the
- 6 feasibility of training and so on that the trial court
- 7 never made because it didn't think it had to make a
- 8 comparative analysis here, so that if, in fact, the
- 9 comparative analysis is crucial to the case, we should
- 10 send the thing back for factfinding by a trial judge
- 11 rather than trying to do it here. Should we remand if
- 12 we accept your argument?
- MR. VERRILLI: It is true Justice Souter
- 14 that the trial court did not make factual findings on a
- 15 whole range of issues with respect to the difficulties
- of constituting the proper dose, the risk of catheter
- 17 placement, the risk of blowouts, the risk of mixing up
- 18 syringes, and the adequacy of the monitoring. And I
- 19 agree, Your Honor, that it did so because it didn't
- 20 believe that that was particularly relevant to the issue
- 21 before it. And that's the -- the basis of our
- 22 disagreement with respect to the legal test.
- Now, it is -- it is our position that the
- 24 record is sufficiently clear and sufficiently
- 25 uncontradicted on the key points with particular respect

- 1 to monitoring that the Court would not have to remand
- 2 but it certainly would be a reasonable thing to do in
- 3 view of the deficiencies in the actual findings.
- 4 JUSTICE KENNEDY: You were interrupted, and
- 5 you gave Justice Ginsburg -- you said you have two
- 6 problems for monitoring. She asked you who would do
- 7 this and what measures would they use.
- 8 MR. VERRILLI: Right.
- 9 JUSTICE KENNEDY: And you were never able to
- 10 get to the second.
- MR. VERRILLI: With respect to the second,
- 12 it's a combination. They would use the available
- 13 equipment, EKG and blood pressure cuff which is the
- 14 standard practice used for monitoring for
- 15 unconsciousness, but in addition, as the expert
- 16 testimony in the case established, you have to have
- 17 close -- close visual observation by the trained person.
- 18 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, as to the cuff, I
- 19 thought the record was rather clear that it is just not
- 20 used at these low blood pressure levels.
- 21 MR. VERRILLI: No, I don't think so, Justice
- 22 Kennedy. There was some question about whether the
- 23 third device that this monitor is used but the blood --
- 24 the tracking of blood pressure is a critical way of
- 25 monitoring for unconsciousness as is the EKG and --

1	JUSTICE SCALIA: Mr. Verrilli, this is an
2	execution, not surgery. The other side contends that
3	you need to monitor the depth of the unconsciousness.
4	When you expect to bring the person back and do not want
5	harm to occur to the person. But they assert that to
6	know whether the person is unconscious or not all it
7	takes is a slap in the face and shaking the person.
8	MR. VERRILLI: Well
9	JUSTICE SCALIA: That's their contention.
10	MR. VERRILLI: There is no slap in the face.
11	There is no shaking the person. There's no testing of
12	that kind whatsoever under the Kentucky protocol. So
13	even under that understanding, which we don't think is
14	correct, that we don't have that here and that's one
15	of the problems. All there is, is visual observation by
16	an untrained warden and an untrained deputy warden who
17	had testified in this case that they don't know what to
18	look for to determine whether somebody is conscious or
19	unconscious.
20	JUSTICE SCALIA: With regard to the trial
21	court's failure to make findings about the availability
22	of people to do this and about the possibility of
23	practical possibility of more effective and less painful
24	drugs, was that a failure to ignore evidence that you
25	produced?

1	MR. VERRILLI: Yes. It
2	JUSTICE SCALIA: Did you introduce evidence
3	to show that indeed medically trained personnel were
4	readily available to do the things you say?
5	MR. VERRILLI: I don't think we introduced
6	evidence that medically trained personnel were ready
7	available, but we did introduce evidence about what
8	needed to be done and, of course, as I said, Kentucky
9	like the other states had their ability to bring
10	medically qualified personnel to bear to run this
11	process. And so I do think
12	JUSTICE SCALIA: I'm very reluctant to send
13	it back to the trial court so we can have a nationwide
14	cessation of all executions while the trial court
15	finishes its work and then it goes to another appeal to
16	the State supreme court and ultimately, well, it could
17	take years.
18	MR. VERRILLI: I understand that, Your
19	Honor, and that's why I suggest
20	JUSTICE SCALIA: You wouldn't want that to
21	happen.
22	MR. VERRILLI: That's why I suggested that
23	there is that this case can be decided on the basis
24	of the record here because the undisputed expert
25	testimony on these key issues shows the deficiencies in

- 1 the protocol.
- 2 JUSTICE SOUTER: May I ask you another
- 3 question?
- 4 MR. VERILLI: Yes.
- 5 JUSTICE SOUTER: May I ask another question
- 6 about the state of the evidence. It really goes to an
- 7 understanding of your position that was discussed a
- 8 little bit earlier about the preferability of simply
- 9 barbiturate dose as opposed to the three-drug
- 10 combination. You said a moment ago that the evidence
- 11 was -- and I think it was undisputed evidence -- that
- three grams of the barbiturate actually used would be
- 13 sufficient to cause death; is that correct.
- 14 MR. VERRILLI: That's correct.
- 15 JUSTICE SOUTER: And that was undisputed?
- 16 MR. VERRILLI: Each side's expert testified
- 17 to precisely the same thing.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Okay.
- 19 MR. VERRILLI: Three grams was certain to
- 20 cause death.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: So that if the current
- 22 three-gram dosage were used and the second and third
- 23 drugs were not administered, death would occur based on
- 24 the undisputed evidence in this case.
- MR. VERRILLI: The record establishes that

- 1 death is certain.
- 2 JUSTICE SOUTER: Secondly, my understanding,
- 3 my recollection, is that in a couple of places in your
- 4 brief, one at least, you referred to the preferability
- of administering a, and I think the term was, massive
- 6 dose of barbiturate, which I took to mean more than the
- 7 three grams. Is that what you meant?
- 8 MR. VERRILLI: No. Three grams is a massive
- 9 dose.
- 10 JUSTICE SOUTER: That is the massive dose.
- MR. VERRILLI: But if one had any doubt
- 12 about the certainty of the effect of causing death, one
- 13 could always just increase the dose. But the record
- 14 here is that three grams --
- 15 JUSTICE SOUTER: Is there any evidence in
- 16 the record about what the enhanced dose would
- 17 appropriately be if you decided or if a protocol author
- 18 decided that there would be no chance whatsoever that
- 19 death would not occur, and the amount should be greater
- 20 than three grams? Was there any evidence in the record
- 21 about how much there ought to be if you were going to go
- 22 above three grams?
- 23 MR. VERRILLI: I'm not sure there's anything
- 24 in the record, Your Honor. There is discussion in the
- 25 amicus briefs about some other jurisdictions that have

- 1 gone as high as five grams.
- 2 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And the government has
- 3 told us they do.
- 4 MR. VERRILLI: Right.
- 5 JUSTICE GINSBURG: In the Federal response.
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You have objections
- 7 that would apply even to your single drug protocol. You
- 8 tell us that one reason this challenged protocol doesn't
- 9 work is because people will mix the drugs in the wrong
- 10 way, including the sodium pentathol. That objection
- 11 would still be there if we adopted your alternative,
- 12 wouldn't it?
- MR. VERRILLI: No, Mr. Chief Justice,
- 14 because, as I've tried to say earlier, even if there is
- 15 maladministration --
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I'm focusing
- 17 specifically on the mixing of the drugs. The mixing of
- 18 the sodium pentathol would be undertaken under the
- 19 Kentucky procedure and under your proposed alternative,
- 20 correct?
- 21 MR. VERRILLI: That's correct. But the
- 22 difference is if there's an error at that stage in the
- 23 process and the execution proceeds, there may be a
- 24 problem that needs to be fixed, but it will not be a
- 25 problem that causes any pain, and that's the critical

- 1 difference because if it doesn't cause pain it can't be
- 2 a cruel and unusual punishment.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: We have been discussing
- 4 this as though that is a constitutional requirement.
- 5 Where does that come from, that you must find the method
- 6 of execution that causes the least pain? We have
- 7 approved electrocution, we have approved death by firing
- 8 squad. I expect both of those have more possibilities
- 9 of painful death than the protocol here. Where does
- 10 this come from that in the, in the execution of a person
- 11 who has been convicted of killing people we must choose
- 12 the least painful method possible? Is that somewhere in
- 13 our Constitution.
- 14 MR. VERRILLI: We don't make the argument
- that States are required to choose the least painful
- 16 method possible. Our standard is grounded on three, I
- 17 think, extremely solid, well- established points of
- 18 Eighth Amendment doctrine.
- 19 The first one is this: The core concern of
- 20 the Eighth Amendment at the time of its founding, of
- 21 course, was precisely the question of whether the
- 22 carrying out of death sentences would inflict torturous
- 23 deaths. So we're at the core of the historical concern.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: No, I don't agree with
- 25 that. The concern was with torture, which is the

- 1 intentional infliction of pain. Now, these States, the
- 2 three-quarters of the States that have the death
- 3 penalty, all except one of whom use this method of
- 4 execution, they haven't set out to inflict pain. To the
- 5 contrary, they have introduced it presumably because
- 6 they, indeed, think it's a more humane way, although not
- 7 one that is free of all risk.
- 8 MR. VERRILLI: That's the second principle,
- 9 Your Honor, is that this Court's cases, including the
- 10 ones that Your Honor averted to, have said that the
- 11 standard is whether the means of execution inflicts
- 12 unnecessary pain.
- 13 JUSTICE SCALIA: No --
- 14 MR. VERRILLI: And --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Unnecessary and wanton,
- 16 unnecessary and wanton infliction of pain.
- 17 MR. VERRILLI: Well, the -- with all due
- 18 respect, Wilkerson and Kemmler say "unnecessary pain."
- 19 Resweber says "unnecessary pain and" --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, then, you're changing
- 21 your position. You said -- you just said earlier that we
- 22 didn't have to find the least painful way.
- 23 MR. VERRILLI: No, that's correct, because
- 24 --
- 25 JUSTICE SCALIA: But if you're not using the

- 1 least painful way, you are inflicting unnecessary pain,
- 2 aren't you?
- 3 MR. VERRILLI: No.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Can you rectify that?
- 5 MR. VERRILLI: Yes, because, Justice Scalia,
- our position is that the pain that is inflicted here
- 7 when this goes wrong is torturous, excruciating pain
- 8 under any definition. We're not talking about a slight
- 9 increment different. We're talking about the infliction
- 10 of torturous pain.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Isn't your position that
- 12 every form of execution that has ever been used in the
- 13 United States, if it were to be used today, would
- 14 violate the Eighth Amendment?
- MR. VERRILLI: No.
- 16 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, which form that's been
- 17 used at some time in an execution would not violate?
- 18 MR. VERRILLI: We would have to suggest it
- 19 to the test that we are advocating, which it would --
- 20 whether there is a risk of torturous pain.
- 21 JUSTICE SCALIA: Hanging certainly would,
- 22 right?
- MR. VERRILLI: Well, it would have to be
- 24 subjected to the test.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Is that a hard question?

- 1 Is that a hard question, whether hanging would, whether
- 2 you had experts who understood the dropweight, you know,
- 3 that was enough that it would break the neck?
- 4 MR. VERRILLI: If there is a risk of
- 5 torturous pain and if there are readily available
- 6 alternatives that could obviate the risk, then any
- 7 significant risk --
- 8 JUSTICE SCALIA: Hanging's no good. What
- 9 about electrocution?
- 10 MR. VERRILLI: Well, it would depend. The
- 11 argument about electrocution, Justice Scalia, is whether
- or not it is painless, and that was its point when it
- was enacted, that it would be a painless form of death.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: It has to be, it has to be
- 15 painless?
- MR. VERRILLI: It does not, but that was its
- 17 point, and I think one would have to subject it to the
- 18 test to see whether it inflicts severe pain that is
- 19 readily avoidable by an alternative.
- 20 JUSTICE ALITO: You have no doubt that the
- 21 three judge protocol that Kentucky is using violates the
- 22 Eighth Amendment, but you really cannot express a
- 23 judgment about any of the other methods that has ever
- 24 been used?
- MR. VERRILLI: Well, electrocution may well.

- 1 But it would depend again, Your Honor. If it could be
- 2 established that it was painless, that there wasn't a
- 3 risk that it could go wrong in a way that inflicts
- 4 excruciating pain then it would be upheld. If it
- 5 couldn't, it wouldn't. That does seem a serious
- 6 question. Obviously, the Court granted certiorari to
- 7 consider it a few terms ago. But that would be the
- 8 test, the mode of analysis here, and I --
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: I would think you'd have to
- 10 show it's unusual, not painless. I mean, cruel and
- 11 unusual is what we're talking about. There's no
- 12 painless requirement in there.
- MR. VERRILLI: There is an unnecessary pain
- 14 requirement. There is also, Justice Scalia --
- 15 JUSTICE SCALIA: Where does this unnecessary
- 16 pain requirement come from?
- 17 MR. VERRILLI: From this Court's cases.
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: Dictum in our cases, right?
- 19 MR. VERRILLI: Yes, it comes from this
- 20 Court's cases.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Dictum in our cases.
- MR. VERRILLI: Well, it seems to me it's
- 23 more than that. And Pinetti is one case that shows it,
- 24 because there's a case in which the Eighth Amendment
- 25 forbid the execution of a person who was insane at the

- 1 time of execution. In that situation there is no intent
- 2 on the part of the people carrying out the execution to
- 3 inflict cruel and unusual punishment. This Court didn't
- 4 require intent in Pinetti. In fact, it said something
- 5 quite different, really the polar opposite. It said
- 6 that the States have to have in place procedures to
- 7 ensure that there wasn't an arbitrary infliction of the
- 8 death penalty in that circumstance, without any
- 9 requirement of intent.
- The Gregg-Woodson-Lockett cases don't have a
- 11 requirement of intent, and the Kemmler and Wilkinson
- 12 cases don't have a requirement of intent in them either.
- 13 With respect to the "unusual" character of it, just
- 14 drawing from the dictionary definitions that Your Honor
- 15 posed in the Harmline case, this is unusual in precisely
- 16 that way in that it is, if Your Honor will just bear me,
- 17 it is such that does not occur in ordinary practice. So
- 18 I do think it's unusual in that sense.
- 19 And I'd like to reserve the balance of my
- 20 time if I may.
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 22 Mr. Verrilli. Mr. Englert?
- ORAL ARGUMENT OF ROY T. ENGLERT, JR.,
- 24 ON BEHALF OF RESPONDENTS
- 25 MR. ENGLERT: Mr. Chief Justice and may it

- 1 please the Court:
- 2 Mr. Verrilli and I agree that if the first
- drug is properly administered there will be a painless
- 4 death. It is only if the first drug is not properly
- 5 administered that there is any possible constitutional
- 6 argument in this, in this case.
- 7 JUSTICE STEVENS: But do you also agree with
- 8 the counter- proposition that if it is not properly
- 9 administered there is some risk of excruciating pain?
- 10 MR. ENGLERT: Yes.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: And do you agree that if
- 12 that risk, say, occurred in every case, that it would
- violate the Eighth Amendment?
- MR. ENGLERT: Yes.
- Because the administration of the first drug
- 16 is so important, it is important to focus on the
- 17 safeguards Kentucky has in place to make sure that the
- 18 first drug is properly administered. Contrary to what
- 19 Mr. Verrilli has suggested, Kentucky has excellent
- 20 safeguards in place. Let me start with who, who puts in
- 21 the IV line, which is the most critical step of the
- 22 process. Kentucky uses what is probably literally the
- 23 best qualified human being in the Commonwealth of
- 24 Kentucky to place the IV line. It uses a phlebotomist
- who in her daily job works with the prison population.

- 1 The problems the prison population --
- 2 JUSTICE SOUTER: I take it this is obvious,
- 3 but I wondered when I went through the brief. I assume
- 4 this phlebotomist is not an MD?
- 5 MR. ENGLERT: Correct.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: What is the training? I
- 7 mean, "phlebotomist" is somebody who works with veins, I
- 8 take it. What is the training?
- 9 MR. ENGLERT: The training is a certain
- amount of learning followed by on-the-job experience.
- 11 This person places 30 needles a day in the prison
- 12 population and at page 273 of the joint appendix it
- points out that she works in her daily job with the
- 14 prison population. So what she is used to from many
- 15 years of working with the prison population is the kind
- of problems of compromised veins we have in the inmate
- 17 population specifically.
- 18 JUSTICE SOUTER: So it's somebody like the
- 19 Red Cross worker who puts in the needle when somebody
- 20 donates blood.
- 21 MR. ENGLERT: No, Your Honor. It's someone
- 22 like the person who inserts an IV in a hospital. The
- 23 experts in this case all agreed that in a hospital
- 24 setting IVs are not inserted by medical doctors, they
- 25 are inserted by phlebotomists. That's what they do.

- 1 They teach medical residents how to insert IVs because
- 2 doctors in training don't know how to do this. And it's
- 3 what's somewhat derisively referred to as scut work in
- 4 the hospital setting.
- 5 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Englert, I thought
- 6 that there wasn't a serious question about who inserts
- 7 the IV, that those are trained people, but the point
- 8 that was highlighted was that the people who control the
- 9 flow into the IV connection, that those people have no
- 10 training, the ones that are called executioners, the
- ones who operate the, what is it, the syringe.
- MR. ENGLERT: Your Honor, Kentucky has
- 13 safeguards in place to make sure that the inmate is
- 14 asleep before the second and third drugs are given.
- Now, with respect to those people's training, it's not
- 16 accurate that they have no training. Kentucky has had
- 17 one execution since 1998, since it adopted lethal
- 18 injection, one execution altogether by lethal injection.
- 19 It's had 100 practice sessions. Kentucky requires
- 20 monthly practice sessions every month by the execution
- 21 team because it is very concerned to get it right.
- Now, with respect to pushing the IV, those
- 23 are people whose training is participation in the
- 24 practice sessions, but to make sure that the first drug
- 25 has had its intended effect, the warden and the deputy

- 1 warden are in the execution chamber. They are literally
- 2 right on top of the inmate. It's suggested in the
- 3 briefs that they're feet away. That's not accurate.
- 4 The record reflects they are inches away.
- 5 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But they also are not
- 6 trained people. I think what seems puzzling to me is
- 7 the State has made an effort to make sure that the
- 8 people on the team that inserts the IV, that those are
- 9 well-trained professional people, but then apparently
- 10 they leave the room, so that once the IV is inserted
- 11 there is no professional person that has any further
- 12 part.
- MR. ENGLERT: That's -- to say they leave
- 14 the room is accurate, but the suggestion that they have
- 15 no further part is misleading. They go into the next
- 16 room. They watch through a one-way mirror, carefully
- 17 watching to make sure nothing has gone wrong. They're
- in close proximity to the inmate and they are watching
- 19 now with respect to the warden and deputy warden it's
- 20 been suggested they don't know what to look for. That's
- 21 false. The record shows otherwise. The main problem in
- 22 the excuses that have gone wrong the main problem is an
- 23 IV goes into tissue instead of the vein. If that
- 24 happens, Dr. Dershowitz testified, pages 600 to 601 of
- 25 the joint appendix the inmate would be awake and

- 1 screaming. The warden and the deputy warden know how to
- 2 tell the difference between sun whose eye haves closed
- 3 and who seems to have gone to sleep and someone who is
- 4 awake and screaming. It's not just Dr. Dershowitz, it's
- 5 Dr. Haas and Dr. Highland, pages 353 and 386 of the
- 6 joint appendix also testified that this would be clear.
- 7 Now, Mr. Verrilli says use a blood
- 8 pressure monitor as a safeguard. Justice Kennedy said
- 9 doesn't the record show that that's not of any use at
- 10 very low blood pressures, and Justice Kennedy is exactly
- 11 correct, at page 578 of the joint appendix.
- 12 Dr. Dershowitz testified that the blood pressure cuff
- 13 simply would have no usefulness in monitoring at this
- 14 level of introduction of the barbituate.
- 15 Mr. Verrilli has mentioned the one drug
- 16 protocol at some length this morning and has said it is
- 17 certain to cause death if three grams of sodium
- 18 thiopental are administered. His expert, Dr. Heath,
- 19 page 499 of the joint appendix, was asked let's assume
- 20 that you don't take any other measures and gave a
- 21 three-gram dose of sodium thiopental, what would you
- 22 expect to happen? I would expect the blood pressure to
- 23 drop. Would that kill them? No, I wouldn't expect it
- 24 to cause death.
- 25 JUSTICE STEVENS: Yes, but isn't it clear

- 1 that a five gram administration of that drug would be
- 2 fatal?
- 3 MR. ENGLERT: No, Your Honor. There is
- 4 nothing in this record --
- 5 JUSTICE STEVENS: It's not in the record,
- 6 but it's in this document that we received the last few
- 7 days, this long deposition of Dr. Dershowitz.
- 8 MR. ENGLERT: Justice Stevens, let me be
- 9 very precise in this answer, if I can. What is clear is
- 10 that a rapidly administered three or five gram dose of a
- 11 barbituate would cause death in normal circumstances.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: And if it doesn't, if you
- just administerED more of the drug, then what?
- 14 MR. ENGLERT: That's problematic actually.
- 15 This is all way outside the record.
- 16 JUSTICE STEVENS: I understand.
- 17 MR. ENGLERT: My understanding is that the
- 18 human body can't take more than a certain amount of the
- 19 barbituates, so it actually becomes problematic to go
- 20 past five grams, which is why nobody comes goes higher
- 21 than five grams.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: Would you contend that the
- 23 second drug in the three-drug protocol is necessary in
- 24 order to make the execution effective?
- MR. ENGLERT: No, not effective.

- JUSTICE STEVENS: Particularly the one that
- 2 the Chief Justice described.
- 3 MR. ENGLERT: Correct.
- 4 JUSTICE STEVENS: You don't want to have
- 5 unpleasant appearance of death at the time.
- 6 MR. ENGLERT: Well, it's more than
- 7 unpleasant appearance of death, Your Honor.
- 8 JUSTICE STEVENS: What is the justification
- 9 for the second drug when it does, that is the drug that
- 10 creates the risk of excruciating pain?
- 11 MR. ENGLERT: That's the drug that creates
- 12 the risk of excruciating if and only if the first drug
- is improperly administered.
- 14 JUSTICE STEVENS: Right. I understand that.
- 15 MR. ENGLERT: And the justification is many
- 16 safeguards are in place to make sure the first drug is
- 17 properly administered so it doesn't create any real
- 18 risk.
- 19 And second, it does bring about a more
- 20 dignified death, dignified for the inmate, dignified for
- 21 the witnesses. It's not just --
- JUSTICE STEVENS: The dignity of the process
- 23 outweighs the risk of excruciating pain?
- MR. ENGLERT: No, Your Honor. No.
- 25 JUSTICE STEVENS: But then the risk of

- 1 excruciating pain outweigh the risk of an undignified
- 2 death?
- 3 MR. ENGLERT: A substantial risk of
- 4 excruciating pain, a substantial risk of excruciating
- 5 pain --
- JUSTICE STEVENS: Even a minimal risk.
- 7 Everyone who goes through the process knows there is
- 8 some risk of excruciating pain that could be avoided by
- 9 a single-drug protocol. Would he prefer to say, I want
- 10 to die in a dignified way?
- MR. ENGLERT: Your Honor, if I may answer
- 12 your question a little bit indirectly. That risk cannot
- 13 be -- the risk of pain can be avoided by single drug
- 14 protocol, but there's not a certain death with one drug
- 15 protocol. It's also a very -- it takes a very long time
- 16 to die with one drug protocol.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: Well, what's "very long?
- 18 10 minutes?
- MR. ENGLERT: Again, your Honor, this is way
- 20 outside the record. What Dr. Dershowitz --
- JUSTICE STEVENS: They use a single drug
- 22 protocol for animals because it's more humane than the
- 23 three drug protocol.
- MR. ENGLERT: No, no. They use a single
- 25 drug with animals because that is the tradition the

- 1 American Veterinary Medical Association has come up
- 2 with, using somewhat different considerations. That's
- 3 what they've come up with --
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, isn't it required by
- 5 Kentucky law?
- 6 MR. ENGLERT: The use of pancuronium bromide
- 7 or any neuromuscular blocking agent, any paralytic, is
- 8 barred by Kentucky law -
- 9 JUSTICE SOUTER: Okay, so something more is
- involved than merely veterinary practice.
- 11 MR. ENGLERT: In the veterinary setting
- 12 someone, some appropriate policymaker has made the
- 13 decision that what they perceive as risks outweigh the
- 14 benefits.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Right. But in the setting
- of Kentucky law the legislature of Kentucky has said we
- 17 are going to make this a legal requirement and I assume
- 18 they had some reason for it other than the fact that
- 19 vets do it that way.
- 20 MR. ENGLERT: Well --
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Does the Kentucky
- law do anything other than adopt the AVMA guidelines.
- MR. ENGLERT: All the Kentucky law does is
- 24 forbid the use of a neuro muscular blocking agent
- 25 euthanizing animals and that's there is no record of

1 this but presumably that's because veterinarians tol	1	this	but	presumably	that's	because	veterinarians	told
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- 2 the state let slate our that was a good idea.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Why was that necessary to
- 4 pass a law if the standard veterinary practice was not
- 5 to use T I'm obviously trying to get to what evidence we
- 6 have here for a finding somewhere that we can take into
- 7 consideration that there is a comparative benefit under
- 8 the, under the veterinary practice as distinct from the
- 9 protocol which has been devised so isn't it reasonable
- 10 to suppose that the Kentucky legislature needs some kind
- of a finding came to some kind of a conclusion that in
- 12 fact there was /SEUG deleterious about using the second
- 13 drug.
- MR. ENGLERT: That much is reasonable.
- 15 JUSTICE SOUTER: Okay.
- 16 MR. ENGLERT: What's deleterious about using
- 17 the second drug we all agree is if the first drug is
- 18 mall administered it can cause main. If the first drug
- 19 is not mall add /STEUPBer inned no pain, no pain in
- 20 humans, no pain in an the mas the judgment was weighed
- 21 not to use the second drug.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: The only cost correct me if
- 23 I'm wrong but the only cost that you have identified in
- 24 using the one drug only are number one, the appearance
- 25 cost which you equated with dignity in your response to

- 1 Justice Stevens and number two, the possibility and I
- 2 don't know how strong a possibility but the possibility
- 3 that the one drug would not work. Is there any other
- 4 cost? In using one drug.
- 5 MR. ENGLERT: Yes. The length of time it
- 6 takes to die.
- 7 JUSTICE SOUTER: And I take it you don't
- 8 have a figure for that Justice Stevens said 10 minutes
- 9 and I don't think you had a clear answer one way or the
- 10 other as to whether there was likely to be more.
- MR. ENGLERT: If you go outside the record
- 12 of this case in which the record wasn't allowed go into
- 13 the Harbison record the logic I believe Dr. Dershowitz
- 14 testified he would expect it to take 30 minutes.
- 15 JUSTICE SOUTER: And 30 minutes is against
- 16 some risk of excruciating pain is, that in effect is it
- 17 reasonable to say 30 minutes is too long.
- 18 MR. ENGLERT: Depends on how large the risk
- 19 of excruciating pain S here there is very little
- 20 evidence risk of excruciating pain.
- 21 JUSTICE SOUTER: Is your point that there is
- 22 simply no quantification of what that risk is.
- 23 MR. ENGLERT: No. That is one of my points
- 24 but that's not my whole point Justice Souter.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Okay what's your.

1	MR. ENGLERT: Take a look at speaking
2	rhetorically, one can take a look at the so-called
3	botched executions in this country the death penalty
4	inform ace center website. The is called botched
5	executions aren't excuses in which there was pain. They
6	are excuses in which in the overwhelming majority one of
7	three things happened. It took a long time Poretto find
. 8	a vein and that's the only reason they say it was
9	botched or the inmate showed muscle movements the exact
10	same thing the poem poem poem prevents and with no
11	evidence whatsoever there was no pain a/K-PLG those
12	/PHOUFPLTs the experts on the other side suggest those
13	are botched excuses or somebody made a human error and
14	didn't get the /SRAEUB properly. You don't need medical
15	training to tell when the guy says it's not working that
16	it hasn't gone into the vein.
17	JUSTICE SOUTER: So the nub of your argument
18	really is they have not made a case or they do not have
19	a record case for any significant likelihood of
20	excruciating pain is this.
21	MR. ENGLERT: That's correct. Beyond the
22	absolute bare minimum likelihood that is inherent in any
23	process that involves human beings. They agriculture
24	mixing of the drugs is a problem. There is a finding of
25	fact to the contrary by the district court well

- 1 supported by evidence. They argue that the placing of
- 2 the IVs is a problem Kentucky really doesn't have the
- 3 best qualified person in the state to place the IVs,
- 4 they argue that there is a risk because the people
- 5 watching don't know what to look for. All they need to
- 6 look for is swelling, whether the person is awake,
- 7 that's noticeable to a lay observer. They argue that
- 8 the personnel monitoring the execution are not
- 9 sufficiently close which is false. The warden is itch
- 10 muches away. That's the testimony --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: It's still unclear why
- 12 they should make such an effort to get trained personnel
- 13 in the first instance and then even if they are in the
- 14 next room, why isn't, why did they deliberately pick
- 15 nonprofessional people to both administer the drugs and
- 16 to check the inmate for consciousness.
- 17 MR. ENGLERT: There are reasons for that
- 18 Justice Ginsburg.
- 19 JUSTICE GINSBURG: What are the reasons.
- 20 MR. ENGLERT: Okay. To administer the drugs
- 21 the only trained personnel, the only so-called trained
- 22 personnel are the people who are barred by the AMA
- 23 ethics requirements and by Kentucky law from
- 24 administering the drugs. Doctors and nurses. As to --
- 25 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But have you that expert

- 1 team and it seems that they would be preferable to
- 2 executioner who have no professional qualifications.
- 3 MR. ENGLERT: The expert team the people who
- 4 have had 100 practice sessions since the last execution
- 5 are administering the drugs.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: I mean the people who
- 7 administer the -- who place the IV lines.
- MR. VERRILLI: They have -- they have zero
- 9 expertise in pushing drugs. They have expertise in
- 10 placing the line. They have expertise in finding a
- 11 vein. They have no more experience pushing drugs than
- 12 the person who pushes the drugs.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: Mr. Englert, can I ask you
- 14 a rather basic question? Do you think the
- 15 constitutionality of the three-drug protocol itself is
- 16 at issue in this case or merely the question whether
- 17 Kentucky has done an adequate job of using that
- 18 protocol?
- MR. ENGLERT: Well, I think what's properly
- 20 before the Court is only the latter question. But
- 21 obviously --
- JUSTICE STEVENS: So if we just decide this
- on the ground -- and the record is very persuasive in
- 24 your favor, I have to acknowledge -- but if we decide
- 25 the fact that Kentucky is doing an adequate job of

- 1 administering this protocol, that would leave open the
- 2 question whether the basic use of this second drug,
- 3 which does nothing but avoid unpleasantness of the
- 4 visitors, is itself constitutional?
- 5 MR. ENGLERT: Well --
- 6 JUSTICE STEVENS: Do we have to wait for
- 7 another case to decide that rule?
- 8 MR. ENGLERT: I -- the Court could write an
- 9 opinion either way, obviously. There is a good reason
- 10 to hold that the use of the second drug is permissible.
- 11 JUSTICE STEVENS: Because I -- to be very
- 12 honest with you, I think that you're -- you make a very
- 13 strong case on the administration in Kentucky on the
- 14 record in this case, but I'm terribly troubled by the
- 15 fact that the second drug is what seems to cause all the
- 16 risk of excruciating pain, and seems to be almost
- 17 totally unnecessary in terms of any rational basis for a
- 18 requirement.
- MR. ENGLERT: Well, Your Honor --
- JUSTICE STEVENS: But that we're not going
- 21 to be able to decide today.
- MR. ENGLERT: Petitioner's own brief
- 23 acknowledges that the three-drug protocol can be applied
- 24 constitutionally. Judge Fogel in the Morales case --
- 25 California --

1 JUSTICE STEVENS: It may have been in this 2 very case, it may be. But that leaves often a whole other area of litigation, is what troubles me. 3 4 MR. ENGLERT: Every State that has publicly said what it uses, uses the three-drug protocol. 5 would be very strange to hold that that is cruel and punishment. JUSTICE STEVENS: But no legislature has 8 ever required it, as I understand it. 9 MR. ENGLERT: No, no. 14 legislatures have 10 required it. 11 JUSTICE STEVENS: The three-drug protocol? 12 The three-drug protocol. MR. ENGLERT: 13 Justice Ginsburg, back to your question. 14 There is a reason why the IV team members leave the 15 The curtains are opened after the IVs are placed, 16 and the people in the room can be seen by the victim's 17 families, by the inmate's families and by the media. 18 Protecting the anonymity of the execution team is 19 extremely important. They are subject to all kinds of 20 21 pressures if their anonymity is not protected. So 22 instead of staying in the room, they go again behind a one-way mirror in an adjacent room where they have an 23 extremely good line of sight to the IVs. 24 actually covered in the trial record in this case, that 25

- 1 they do have a good line of sight. And it's not --
- 2 nothing really changes because they go into another
- 3 room. Pages 210 and 286 to 287 of the joint appendix is
- 4 where there is testimony that the people in the adjacent
- 5 room do have a good view of the IV line.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: And the executioners are
- 7 also not visible to the public?
- 8 MR. ENGLERT: Correct.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: There was a finding that
- 10 the second drug serves no therapeutic purpose.
- 11 MR. ENGLERT: That's correct.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: That's --
- MR. ENGLERT: We don't quarrel with that.
- 14 The purpose it serves is the purpose of dignifying the
- process for the benefit of the inmate and for the
- 16 benefit of the witnesses.
- 17 The Chief Justice said, isn't there going to
- 18 be litigation against another protocol as soon as it's
- 19 adopted, and yes, Mr. Verrilli will say that's silly, to
- 20 protect the dignity of the inmate, that argument will
- 21 fail. But the history of death penalty litigation
- 22 suggests that the next advocate who comes along
- 23 representing an inmate will say, the one drug protocol
- is no good because it doesn't do enough to protect the
- 25 dignity, or the two drug protocol is no good because it

- 1 doesn't do enough to protect dignity.
- 2 With respect to the time it takes to carry
- 3 out an execution and whether that's a legitimate
- 4 consideration, I actually invite the Court's attention
- 5 to one of the briefs, amicus briefs, filed in support of
- 6 Petitioners, the Human Rights Watch brief, which in turn
- 7 cites the decision of the UN Human Rights Committee in
- 8 the NG case.
- 9 JUSTICE STEVENS: But if we held that that
- 10 justification was insufficient to justify this protocol,
- it's hardly likely we would hold that it's so serious
- 12 and make the whole procedure unconstitutional.
- 13 MR. ENGLERT: I'm not sure I follow the
- 14 question.
- 15 JUSTICE STEVENS: The interest in protecting
- 16 the dignity of the inmate and of the observers is the
- 17 justification for the second drug.
- MR. ENGLERT: Yes.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: If we held that that --
- 20 that that justification is insufficient to justify the
- 21 protocol, how could we ever hold that that justification
- is so serious as to make the whole procedure
- 23 unconstitutional.
- 24 MR. ENGLERT: I'll tell you frankly how you
- 25 could hold that. What will happen in the next case is

1 they will say: This issue wasn't raised in t	the t	trial
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- 2 court in Kentucky, therefore the Supreme Court decided
- 3 this case on an inadequate factual record, and therefore
- 4 the Court should take a new look at it because life and
- 5 death are at stake.
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And presumably it
- 7 would depend upon whatever new alternative the plaintiff
- 8 in that case proposed.
- 9 MR. ENGLERT: Correct. If the standard is
- 10 truly eliminating all unnecessary risk of pain than
- 11 anything that is not the single optimal standard is
- 12 unconstitutional, and the States cannot do what they
- 13 have done for the last 220 years, which is to use
- 14 different protocols at different times and work to
- 15 improve their protocols. Thank you.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 17 Mr. Englert. Mr. Garre?
- 18 ORAL ARGUMENT OF GREGORY G. GARRE,
- 19 ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES,
- 20 AS AMICUS CURIAE,
- 21 SUPPORTING THE RESPONDENTS
- MR. GARRE: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice,
- 23 and may it please the Court:
- 24 Petitioners ask this Court to invalidate a
- 25 method of execution that everyone agrees is entirely

- 1 pain free when followed and to order the State of
- 2 Kentucky to adopt a method that has never been used in
- 3 any execution and is out of step with the laws and
- 4 practice in every death penalty jurisdiction in the
- 5 United States. The proposed constitutional standard
- 6 that Petitioners say requires this extraordinary result
- 7 has several fundamental flaws.
- 8 First, it is at odds with this Court's
- 9 precedence establishing a substantial risk threshold for
- 10 claims of future injury in the Eighth Amendment context
- and this Court's cases holding that the added anguish
- 12 caused by the negligent, accidental or inadvertent
- 13 infliction of pain is not the unnecessary infliction of
- 14 pain prescribed by the Eighth Amendment. Justice
- 15 Marshall wrote that for the Court in the Estelle v.
- 16 Gamble opinion on page 105, and this Court has
- 17 reiterated the principle that negligent, accidental or
- 18 inadvertent infliction of pain, however strong or
- 19 anguishing, is not proscribed by the Eighth Amendment.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: What do you say to the
- 21 response which I think was in the briefs that the
- 22 substantiality requirement has been derived in the
- 23 course of conditions of confinement -- sort of
- 24 litigation -- and we really should regard execution as
- 25 sort of a -- a separate subject for purposes of coming

- 1 up with a standard. What do you say to that?
- MR. GARRE: A few things. We are here today
- 3 in this Section 1983 action, because this Court and the
- 4 Hill case and the Nelson case analogized methods of
- 5 execution claims to conditions of confinement claims
- 6 insofar as these claims are not directed to the
- 7 punishment itself, but to the manner in which punishment
- 8 is implemented or carried out. So this Court itself
- 9 under the Hill and Nelson case put these types of cases
- 10 into the conditions of confinement.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, we did for purposes
- 12 of making a habeas 1983 distinction, but I -- is the
- 13 distinction supportable when we come down to the
- 14 question whether there should be a standard specific to
- 15 execution as opposed to other conditions?
- MR. GARRE: I don't think it is, Justice
- 17 Souter. The substantial risk standard that the Court
- 18 has applied in the Farmer v. Brennan case and the Hiland
- 19 v. McKinney case -- applied to conditions of
- 20 confinement claims -- where inmates faced the risk of an
- 21 excruciating pain or even death. If the risk -- if the
- 22 standard that the Court applies to someone who is forced
- 23 to spend -- to live with a five pack a day smoker is
- 24 substantial risk, even though that person faces the risk
- 25 of developing lung cancer, which everybody would agree

- is excruciatingingly painful death they're not sure why
- 2 the Constitution would place any different standard with
- 3 respect to the types of claims at issue in this case.
- 4 JUSTICE ALITO: Is there any comparative
- 5 element in the substantial risk standard, if it were
- 6 clearly established, undisputed that there was an
- 7 alternative method that was much less risky, would there
- 8 be an Eighth Amendment problem with the State or the
- 9 Federal government nevertheless persisted in using a
- 10 method that was inferior?
- 11 MR. GARRE: We think that that could be part
- 12 of the analysis -- that you would look to other feasible
- 13 available alternatives. Although I would say that --
- 14 JUSTICE SCALIA: If that's part of the
- 15 analysis, this never ends.
- MR. GARRE: Well, Justice --
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: If that's part of the
- 18 analysis, there will always be some claim that there is
- 19 some new method that's been devised, and once again
- 20 executions are stayed throughout the country.
- 21 MR. GARRE: And we agree with that, and
- 22 that's why we think that Petitioner's claim is wrong.
- 23 It's going to lead to endless litigation and a regime in
- 24 which there is no finality. The other point I wanted to
- 25 make, in response to Justice Alito, is that as a

- 1 threshold matter, this court case is establishing that
- 2 you have to show with respect to the method you're
- 3 challenging, a risk that is more than the risk of
- 4 negligence or accident in the method that is being
- 5 carried out. And again, Estelle v. Gamble establishes
- 6 that, Farmer v. Brennan reiterates that --
- 7 JUSTICE KENNEDY: So you're standard is that
- 8 there has -- well, don't let me misphrase it for you,
- 9 but there have to be other obvious available
- 10 alternatives.
- MR. GARRE: Well, the way that we've
- 12 described it, Justice Kennedy, is you that have to show
- 13 a substantial risk that the method you're challenging
- 14 would impose a considerably greater degree of pain than
- 15 other available feasible alternatives. But to get into
- 16 that kind of comparative inquiry, we do think that you
- 17 have to get over the first threshold established by this
- 18 Court's cases -- that you're arguing about something
- 19 other than the accidental or negligent infliction of
- 20 pain, and we don't think Petitioners in this case have
- 21 even gotten over that hurdle.
- 22 JUSTICE KENNEDY: So your safeguard one is
- 23 the only -- you have against Justice Scalia, endless
- 24 litigation, or does your threshold two do the same
- 25 thing.

1	MR. GARRE: Well, threshold two would as
2	well because once you're into that kind of comparative
3	inquiry you would still have to take a look at the
4	feasible other alternative and no one has ever tried the
5	one drug alternative. Justice Breyer you're right we
6	don't know whether it's going to work in practice.
7	JUSTICE SCALIA: Those who oppose capital
8	punishment entirely across the board are quite willing
9	to take a careful look at everything. They are quite
LO	willing to take a look at other alternatives. That's
11	the problem we come up with a decision that requires a
12	careful look in every case whenever there is a newly
13	developed method of execution the problem will always be
14	before us and executions will always be impermissible.
15	We agree with those concerns, Justice Scalia, I want to
16	be clear. Our standard is not a least risk
17	JUSTICE BREYER: You have to, I mean, I
18	can't, I don't know if "substantial" is the right word
19	to capture it. Perhaps the right word is is there a
20	significant risk that can be easily averted and what I'm
21	worried about here is do we or do we not send it back,
22	I'm quite honestly disturbed by the fact that in this
23	I can't report they both recommend pancuronium and that
24	the sodium thiopental doesn't work not even in grams of
25	three doses in all cases but they think the contrary and

- 1 if there is uncertainty here should we send it back for
- 2 consideration of all these things in a more full hearing
- 3 under a standard that does allow comparisons with other
- 4 methods not to find a comparison not too fine a
- 5 comparison but at least a practical comparison.
- 6 MR. GARRE: And the answer is no. First and
- 7 foremost they had an opportunity to develop the one drug
- 8 alternative below. They made no effort to present any
- 9 evidence on that. The record is completely undeveloped
- 10 and typically this court doesn't allow people to go back
- 11 and relitigate a case again.
- 12 JUSTICE SOUTER: Yes but if we don't do
- 13 something like that in this case Mr. Garre another case
- 14 is going to come along and we are going to be right back
- 15 here a year from now or 18 months from now and wouldn't
- 16 it be better to get one case litigated thoroughly and
- 17 get the issue decided rather than simply wait here for
- 18 another one to wind its way.
- 19 MR. GARRE: We think that this court should
- 20 decide the issue. We think it should decide it by
- 21 saying Petitioners have not established a
- 22 constitutionally significant.
- 23 JUSTICE SOUTER: Sure but if we decide it on
- 24 this basis the next Petitioner is going to say I'm
- 25 coming into court with evidence these people did not

- 1 present and therefore we are going to have a new case
- 2 and new round of litigation and I think what's
- 3 disturbing Justice Breyer what's disturbing me and
- 4 others is we want some kind of a decision here, and it
- 5 seems to me that the most expeditious way of getting it
- 6 if comparison analysis is appropriate and I will be
- 7 candid to say I think it is is to send this case back
- 8 and say okay do a comparative analysis, make the
- 9 findings and we will then have a case that will in
- 10 effect resolve the issue as much as one case can ever
- 11 do.
- MR. GARRE: Let me make two responses to
- that if I could again we don't think Petitioners have
- 14 shown anything close to a substantially of risk and
- 15 second a virtue in allowing there is a virtue in not
- 16 going further in this case and allowing the states
- 17 themselves to continue to assess this matter. The
- 18 states have continuously reassessed and repeated
- 19 modifications to their lethal injection protocols three
- 20 states within the last years have taken major internal
- 21 reviews of the three drug protocol California Tennessee
- 22 and Florida they have all concluded that additional
- 23 safeguards were warranted but that --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: You say that substantial,
- 25 that comparison with other possibilities is not

- 1 necessary so long as the only risk that is coming is a
- 2 risk of negligence or improper execution of what, of
- 3 what the protocol requires right?
- 4 MR. GARRE: That would be --
- 5 JUSTICE SCALIA: You would say that so long,
- 6 so long as the only risk comes from negligent
- 7 application of the protocol, no comparison is required?
- 8 MR. GARRE: Yes.
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: And if we decided that, if
- 10 we decided that if this protocol is properly executed,
- 11 it does not create a substantial risk that would be the
- 12 end of the matter wouldn't it.
- 13 MR. GARRE: That would be the end of the
- 14 matter.
- 15 JUSTICE SCALIA: And we would not have
- 16 another case in front of us next year.
- MR. GARRE: That's probably true. There is
- 18 no shortage of imagination on the death penalty
- 19 advocates that have brought those kinds of claims but a
- 20 decision along those lines would go a great way to
- 21 providing greater clarity and certainly in this area.
- 22 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Garre would you
- 23 explain to me I can't the Federal Government has picked
- 24 five grams instead of flee.
- MR. GARRE: May I answer the question.

1 .	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yes.
2	MR. GARRE: Yes Your Honor. The Federal
3	Government concluded that that was an appropriate dosage
4	to ensure a deep consciousness among the condemned
5	inmate. Other jurisdictions have picked three grams and
6	I would say that the Federal Government is currently
7	considering whether five or three is the correct dosage.
8	But the Federal Government
9	JUSTICE KENNEDY: Did you mean to say
10	unconsciousness.
11	MR. GARRE: Unconsciousness, yes to render
12	the inmate deeply unconscious for a number of hours
13	that's established by the record thank you very much.
14	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you Mr. Garre
15	Mr. Verrilli, you have three minutes remaining.
16	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF DONALD B. VERRILLI, JR.
17	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS
18	MR. VERRILLI: Thank you Mr. Chief Justice.
19	The risk here is real that is why in the State of
20	Kentucky it's unlawful to euthanize animals in the way
21	that carries out its executions that's true not only
22	with the use of pancuronium one cannot use potassium
23	unless someone trained in ensuring effective anesthesia
24	is participating in the process and what that is is a
25	marker that this is a real danger sufficiently real tha

- 1 it's not tolerated with animals.
- 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But the anesthesia
- 3 concern of course is you don't want to kill the person
- 4 when you're administering just anesthesia in a surgery
- 5 so you would want somebody trained there that you could
- 6 bring them back if anything went wrong that concern is
- 7 not present here.
- 8 MR. VERRILLI: Nor is it present with
- 9 respect to euthanizing animals and never the -- it's the
- 10 danger of the anesthesia going wrong there can be a
- 11 torturous pain inflicted that has led veterinarians to
- 12 say you have to have somebody in the process who is
- 13 trained in monitoring anesthetic death and Justice
- 14 Breyer if I could refer back to your Netherlands point
- 15 my understanding is that in the Netherlands there is a
- 16 doctor present who is trained in anesthesiology who
- 17 administers this whole process and so the risk is
- 18 dramatically different in a situation where you have
- 19 that trained person there than the situation we have in
- 20 Kentucky now with respect to the other states and the
- 21 other so-called botched executions that my friend
- 22 Mr. Englert referred to is just not right to say that
- 23 they were all about cut downs and small problems. The
- 24 record finds a fact in the Morales case without respect
- 25 to the 11 lethal injection studies there six out of the

- 1 seven were inadequately -- the experts in that case
- 2 admitted it was likely that one was not likely an at the
- 3 time -- at the time that the pancuronium and potassium
- 4 were put in the system similarly in the case in North
- 5 Carolina the evidence credited by the court was that
- 6 with respect to four of them the condemned inmate was on
- 7 the -- any gasping struggling not the kind of
- 8 involuntary twitching that Mr. Englert is worried about
- 9 but clear that the anesthetics are not working with
- 10 respect to the lethality of thiopental at page 42 of the
- 11 joint appendix Dr. Heath says that thiopental will be
- 12 lethal by itself three grams at page 494 he says indeed
- 13 it will be lethal by itself in virtually every case at
- 14 two grams. At page, at page forgive me I don't have the
- 15 page number reference handy but Dr. Dershowitz the
- 16 state's expert says the same thing now the reference
- 17 that Mr. Englert referred to at page 499 is where
- 18 Dr. Heath is being a asked a question of whether would
- 19 you expect death to occur when three grams are
- 20 administered but he is being asked a series of questions
- 21 about administration in a surgical procedure which are
- 22 using ventilators and other procedures to keep the
- 23 person alive and he said in that setting the answer is
- 24 no so that's just not a fair representation of the
- 25 record at all now with respect to the question of

Т.	whether we ought to analogize this to the deliberate
2	indifference standard and convictions of confinement
3	cases it seems to me there is a fundamental difference
4	here which is that the Commonwealth of Kentucky is
5	making a deliberate choice here.
6	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Finish your
7	sentence.
8	MR. VERRILLI: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice
9	A deliberate choice here to use chemicals that create
10	this danger and given that it has done so it ought to
11	have the commensurate obligation to take the reasonable
12	steps necessary to on vote the risk.
13	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you counsel.
14	The case is submitted.
15	(Whereupon, at 11:05 a.m., the case in the
16	above-entitled matter was submitted.)
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	1	1	l	I
<u>A</u> ·	18:23 27:3,5,9	45:7 48:7 50:4	56:23	assert 16:5
aback 9:6	27:18 31:18	50:5 51:8	answers 14:3	assertion 7:5
ability 17:9	32:10,13 33:13	alternatives	anti-convulsives	assess 52:17
able 13:13 15:9	33:17 36:18	24:6 48:13	10:6	Association 6:4
41:21	56:20	49:10,15 50:10	apologize 5:4	35:1
above-entitled	administering	altogether 29:18	apparently 30:9	assume 4:17,24
1:14 57:16	19:5 39:24	AMA 39:22	appeal 17:15	28:3 31:19
absolute 38:22	40:5 41:1 55:4	amazing 7:23	appear 6:12	35:17
accept 14:12	administers	Amendment	appearance	assure 4:3 5:9
accident 49:4	55:17	11:25 21:18,20	33:5,7 36:24	5:17
accidental 46:12	administration	23:14 24:22	APPEARAN	attention 44:4
46:17 49:19	3:20 5:11	25:24 27:13	1:17	audience 10:17
accompanying	27:15 32:1	46:10,14,19	appendix 4:7	11:4
9:20	41:13 56:21	48:8	7:4 28:12	author 19:17
accurate 29:16	admitted 56:2	American 6:4	30:25 31:6,11	availability 14:5
30:3,14	adopt 35:22	35:1	31:19 43:3	16:21
ace 38:4	46:2	amicus 1:24 2:8	56:11	available 15:12
achieved 12:15	adopted 20:11	19:25 44:5	application 53:7	17:4,7 24:5
acknowledge	29:17 43:19	45:20	applied 41:23	48:13 49:9,15
40:24	advocate 43:22	amount 19:19	47:18,19	averted 22:10
acknowledges	advocates 53:19	28:10 32:18	applies 47:22	50:20
41:23	advocating	analogize 57:1	apply 20:7	AVMA 35:22
action 47:3	23:19	analogized 47:4	appropriate	avoid 41:3
actual 4:14 15:3	agent 35:7,24	analysis 14:8,9	10:10 35:12	avoidable 24:19
add 36:19	ago 18:10 25:7	25:8 48:12,15	52:6 54:3	avoided 34:8,13
added 46:11	agree 3:21 10:10	48:18 52:6,8	appropriately	awake 30:25
addition 9:10	14:19 21:24	anesthesia 10:24	19:17	31:4 39:6
15:15	27:2,7,11	54:23 55:2,4	approved 21:7,7	a.m 1:16 3:2
additional 8:19	36:17 47:25	55:10	arbitrary 26:7	57:15
13:23 52:22	48:21 50:15	anesthesiology	area 42:3 53:21	a/K-PLG 38:11
additionally	agreed 4:7 28:23	55:16	argue 39:1,4,7	В
14:1	agrees 45:25	anesthetic 3:12	argues 7:16	
address 3:25	agriculture	5:5,11 6:1	arguing 49:18	B 1:18 2:3,11
addressed 10:11	38:23	12:12,14 55:13	argument 1:15	3:6 54:16
11:3	AL 1:9	anesthetics 56:9	2:2,10 3:3,6,20	back 13:5 14:10
adequacy 14:18	Alito 6:11,20,24	anesthetized 4:4	5:2 6:12,13,23	16:4 17:13
adequate 40:17	7:9 12:6 23:11	anguish 46:11	7:12 11:1,19	42:14 50:21
40:25	23:16 24:20	anguishing	11:25 12:4	51:1,10,14
adequately 4:3	48:4,25	46:19	14:12 21:14	52:7 55:6,14
5:19 12:23	alive 56:23	animals 9:5	24:11 26:23	balance 26:19
adjacent 42:23	allow 51:3,10	34:22,25 35:25	27:6 38:17	barbituate 6:9
43:4	allowed 37:12	54:20 55:1,9	43:20 45:18	11:20 12:5
administer 7:25	allowing 52:15	anonymity	54:16	31:14 32:11
39:15,20 40:7	52:16	42:19,21	arguments 12:7	barbituates 9:22
administered	alternative 6:7	answer 32:9	asked 14:4 15:6	10:6 32:19
3:13 4:8,11,17	7:6,11 20:11	34:11 37:9	31:19 56:18,20	barbiturate 8:7
4:18 5:1,6,16	20:19 24:19	51:6 53:25	asleep 29:14	18:9,12 19:6
,				

		:		
bare 38:22	7:4,5,16 9:14	51:11,13,13,16	3:24 4:5 9:15	51:25 53:1
barred 35:8	19:4 28:3	52:1,7,9,10,16	9:19,21,24	commensurate
39:22	41:22 44:6	53:16 55:24	10:5,9,18,22	57:11
based 3:20	briefs 19:25	56:1,4,13	11:5 20:6,13	COMMISSIO
18:23	30:3 44:5,5	57:14,15	20:16 26:21,25	1:7
basic 40:14 41:2	46:21	cases 4:18 11:16	33:2 35:21	Committee 44:7
basis 14:21	bring 16:4 17:9	22:9 25:17,18	43:17 45:6,16	Commonwealth
17:23 41:17	33:19 55:6	25:20,21 26:10	45:22 54:1,14	27:23 57:4
51:24	bromide 35:6	26:12 46:11	54:18 55:2	communication
Baze 1:3 3:4	brought 11:6	47:9 49:18	57:6,8,13	11:3
bear 17:10	53:19	50:25 57:3	chloride 3:16	comparative
26:16	burning 3:17	catheter 14:16	choice 57:5,9	14:8,9 36:7
beginning 12:8		cause 8:11 10:17	choose 21:11,15	48:4 49:16
behalf 1:19,21	<u>C</u>	11:9 18:13,20	circumstance	50:2 52:8
1:23 2:4,6,8,12	C 1:3 2:1 3:1	21:1 31:17,24	26:8	comparison
3:7 26:24	California 41:25	32:11 36:18	circumstances	51:4,5,5 52:6
45:19 54:17	52:21	41:15	32:11	52:25 53:7
beings 38:23	called 29:10	caused 46:12	citations 6:25	comparisons
believe 14:20	38:4	causes 20:25	cites 44:7	51:3
37:13	cancer 47:25	21:6	claim 8:3 11:8	completely 51:9
benefit 36:7	candid 52:7	causing 19:12	48:18,22	component 5:24
43:15,16	capital 50:7	center 38:4	claims 46:10	compromised
benefits 35:14	capture 50:19	certain 8:25	47:5,5,6,20	28:16
best 27:23 39:3	careful 50:9,12	9:10,11 18:19	48:3 53:19	concern 21:19
better 51:16	carefully 30:16	19:1 28:9	clarified 5:18	21:23,25 55:3
beyond 4:1 13:9	Carolina 56:5	31:17 32:18	clarity 5:4 53:21	55:6
38:21	carried 47:8	34:14	clear 14:24	concerned 29:21
big 6:11	49:5	certainly 11:11	15:19 31:6,25	concerns 50:15
bit 18:8 34:12	carries 54:21	15:2 23:21	32:9 37:9	concluded 7:24
blocking 35:7,24	carry 44:2	53:21	50:16 56:9	52:22 54:3
blood 15:13,20	carrying 21:22	certainty 19:12	clearly 8:24 48:6	conclusion
15:23,24 28:20	26:2	certiorari 25:6	clinical 4:12	36:11
31:7,10,12,22	case 3:4 4:9,17	cessation 17:14	close 15:17,17	condemned 5:6
blowouts 14:17	5:8 6:15,17 8:8	challenged 20:8	30:18 39:9	10:21 54:4
board 50:8	9:9,11 11:6	challenging 5:24	52:14	56:6
body 32:18	12:4 13:4 14:9	49:3,13	closed 31:2	conditions 46:23
botched 38:3,4,9	15:16 16:17	chamber 30:1	Code 6:3	47:5,10,15,19
38:13 55:21	17:23 18:24	chance 11:9	combination 7:6	confinement
BOWLING 1:4	25:23,24 26:15	19:18	15:12 18:10	46:23 47:5,10
break 24:3	27:6,12 28:23	changes 43:2	come 12:5 21:5	47:20 57:2
Brennan 47:18	37:12 38:18,19	changing 22:20	21:10 25:16	connection 29:9
49:6	40:16 41:7,13	character 26:13	35:1,3 47:13	conscious 3:15
I .	41:14,24 42:2	check 39:16	50:11 51:14	16:18
Breyer 7:18 8:12 9:2 12:24	42:25 44:8,25	chemical 7:6,11	comes 25:19	consciousness
3	45:3,8 47:4,4,9	chemicals 7:7	32:20 43:22	11:16 39:16
50:5,17 52:3	47:18,19 48:3	57:9	53:6	54:4
55:14	49:1,20 50:12		coming 46:25	consider 25:7
brief 5:22 6:25	17.1,20 30.12	Chief 3:3,8,19	Coming 40.23	Consider 43.7
	<u> </u>			
the enactioning resets and the states of the filter than the state of resembles that the	autusta maaniisa saa kamakmaa mirsta saata sii siddiinii sii kama	ماكا مشاكلة المنظمة المنظمة المنظمة المنظمة المنظمة المنطقة المنطقة المنطقة المنطقة المنطقة المنطقة المنطقة الم	- annual or a real regard Suprise as the result for the result of the first the desired and the field and belief the	m may programmer in gradus about the strong and some managers about the brillians of all including the second

considerably	cost 36:22,23,25	cruelly 3:11	deeply 54:12	34:16 37:6
49:14	37:4	cuff 15:13,18	deficiencies 15:3	difference 20:22
consideration	counsel 57:13	31:12	17:25	21:1 31:2 57:3
36:7 44:4 51:2	counter 27:8	curiae 1:24 2:9	definition 8:7	different 23:9
considerations	country 38:3	45:20	9:22 23:8	26:5 35:2
35:2	48:20	current 18:21	definitions	45:14,14 48:2
considering	couple 19:3	currently 54:6	26:14	55:18
54:7	course 5:7 6:6	curtains 42:16	degree 49:14	difficult 14:3
constituting	8:15 11:18,21	cut 55:23	deleterious	difficulties
14:16	13:8 17:8		36:12,16	14:15
Constitution	21:21 46:23	D	deliberate 57:1	difficulty 4:13
21:13 48:2	55:3	D 1:7 3:1	57:5,9	dignified 33:20
constitutional	courses 3:17	daily 27:25	deliberately	33:20,20 34:10
12:9 21:4 27:5	court 1:1,15 3:9	28:13	39:14	dignifying 43:14
41:4 46:5	5:2 7:5,10 14:6	danger 3:11	demonstrate	dignity 10:20
constitutionali	14:14 15:1	54:25 55:10	13:8	11:3 33:22
13:2 40:15	17:13,14,16	57:10	Department 1:8	36:25 43:20,25
constitutionally	25:6 26:3 27:1	day 12:6 28:11	1:23	44:1,16
41:24 51:22	38:25 40:20	47:23	depend 24:10	directed 47:6
contend 32:22	41:8 45:2,2,4	days 32:7	25:1 45:7	disagree 3:23
contends 16:2	45:23,24 46:15	death 4:9 6:1	Depends 37:18	disagreement
contention 8:2	46:16 47:3,8	8:7,11,17,25	deposition 32:7	14:22
16:9	47:17,22 49:1	9:10 11:10,12	depth 12:15	discomfort
context 46:10	51:10,19,25	11:15,17 13:3	16:3	10:16
continue 52:17	56:5	18:13,20,23	deputy 1:22	discussed 18:7
continuously	courts 6:13 7:2	19:1,12,19	16:16 29:25	discussing 21:3
52:18	court's 11:16	21:7,9,22 22:2	30:19 31:1	discussion 19:24
contractions	16:21 22:9	24:13 26:8	derisively 29:3	distinct 36:8
10:1,13 11:10	25:17,20 44:4	27:4 31:17,24	derived 46:22	distinction
contrary 5:9	46:8,11 49:18	32:11 33:5,7	Dershowitz	47:12,13
22:5 27:18	covered 42:25	33:20 34:2,14	30:24 31:4,12	district 38:25
38:25 50:25	co-counsel 7:1	38:3 43:21	32:7 34:20	disturbed 50:22
control 29:8	create 33:17	45:5 46:4	37:13 56:15	disturbing 52:3
controls 12:7,8	53:11 57:9	47:21 48:1	described 33:2	52:3
convicted 21:11	creates 33:10,11	53:18 55:13	49:12	doctor 6:3 55:16
convictions 57:2	credible 11:19	56:19	despite 11:1	doctors 6:3
core 21:19,23	11:24	deaths 21:23	determine 16:18	12:25 13:19
correct 9:16,18	credited 56:5	decide 40:22,24	develop 51:7	28:24 29:2
12:17 16:14	critical 5:13	41:7,21 51:20	developed 50:13	39:24
18:13,14 20:20	15:24 20:25	51:20,23	developing	doctrine 21:18
20:21 22:23	27:21	decided 17:23	47:25	document 32:6
28:5 31:11	critically 4:2	19:17,18 45:2	device 15:23	doing 13:9 40:25
33:3 36:22	Cross 28:19	51:17 53:9,10	devised 36:9	DONALD 1:18
38:21 43:8,11	crucial 14:9	decision 35:13	48:19	2:3,11 3:6
45:9 54:7	cruel 12:1 21:2	44:7 50:11	dictionary 26:14	54:16
CORRECTI	25:10 26:3	52:4 53:20	Dictum 25:18,21	donates 28:20
1:9	42:6	deep 54:4	die 11:11 34:10	door 13:5
1	1	Ĭ.	ı	I

dosage 18:22	E	35:6,11,20,23	evidence 8:4	54:21 55:21
54:3,7	E 2:1 3:1,1	36:14,16 37:5	16:24 17:2,6,7	expect 16:4 21:8
dose 5:5 6:8	earlier 18:8	37:11,18,23	18:6,10,11,24	31:22,22,23
8:10,13 9:1	20:14 22:21	38:1,21 39:17	19:15,20 36:5	37:14 56:19
14:16 18:9	easily 50:20	39:20 40:3,13	37:20 38:11	expeditious 52:5
19:6,9,10,13	effect 8:1 14:4	40:19 41:5,8	39:1 51:9,25	experience
19:16 31:21		41:19,22 42:4	56:5	28:10 40:11
32:10	19:12 29:25	42:10,13 43:8	evidentiary 6:22	expert 4:6 8:9,9
doses 50:25	37:16 52:10	43:11,13 44:13	exact 38:9	8:9 9:9 15:15
doubt 19:11	effective 16:23	44:18,24 45:9	exactly 31:10	17:24 18:16
24:20	32:24,25 54:23	45:17 55:22	example 4:14	31:18 39:25
downs 55:23	effectively 3:13	56:8,17	13:17	40:3 56:16
	5:23	enhance 10:19	excellent 27:19	expertise 40:9,9
Dr 30:24 31:4,5	efficacy 13:15			40:10
31:5,12,18	effort 30:7 39:12	enhanced 19:16	excruciating 3:17 23:7 25:4	
32:7 34:20	51:8	ensure 12:14	į.	experts 24:2
37:13 56:11,15	Eight 11:25	26:7 54:4	27:9 33:10,12	28:23 38:12
56:18	Eighth 21:18,20	ensuring 54:23	33:23 34:1,4,4	56:1
dramatically	23:14 24:22	entirely 45:25	34:8 37:16,19	explain 53:23
55:18	25:24 27:13	50:8	37:20 38:20	express 24:22
drawing 26:14	46:10,14,19	equated 36:25	41:16 47:21	extend 11:11
drop 31:23	48:8	equipment	excruciatingin	extent 10:14,23
dropweight 24:2	either 26:12	15:13	48:1	extra 8:18
drug 3:12,14,16	41:9	error 8:16,16	excuses 30:22	extraordinary
6:18 7:13 9:25	EKG 15:13,25	20:22 38:13	38:5,6,13	46:6
10:3 11:7,13	electrocution	ESQ 1:18,20,22	executed 3:14	extremely 21:17
11:23 20:7	21:7 24:9,11	2:3,5,7,11	53:10	42:20,24
27:3,4,15,18	24:25	established	execution 7:8	eye 31:2
29:24 31:15	element 48:5	15:16 21:17	8:21 10:11	
32:1,13,23	eliminating	25:2 48:6	13:1 16:2	F
33:9,9,11,12	45:10	49:17 51:21	20:23 21:6,10	face 16:7,10
33:16 34:13,14	employ 12:20	54:13	22:4,11 23:12	faced 47:20
34:16,21,23,25	EMTs 13:17,20	establishes 5:8,9	23:17 25:25	faces 47:24
36:13,17,17,18	13:25	8:8,25 9:25	26:1,2 29:17	fact 14:4,8 26:4
36:21,24 37:3		18:25 49:5	29:18,20 30:1	35:18 36:12
37:4 41:2,10	enacted 24:13	establishing	32:24 39:8	38:25 40:25
41:15 43:10,23	ended 8:15	46:9 49:1	40:4 42:19	41:15 50:22
43:25 44:17	endless 48:23	Estelle 46:15	44:3 45:25	55:24
50:5 51:7	49:23	49:5	46:3,24 47:5	factfinding
52:21	ends 48:15	ET 1:9	47:15 50:13	14:10
drugs 16:24	Englert 1:20 2:5	ethical 13:18	53:2	factual 14:14
18:23 20:9,17	26:22,23,25	ethics 6:4 39:23	executioner	45:3
29:14 38:24	27:10,14 28:5	euthanasia 9:3,4	40:2	fail 43:21
	28:9,21 29:5	euthanize 54:20	executioners	failure 16:21,24
39:15,20,24	29:12 30:13	1 ' ' '	29:10 43:6	fair 56:24
40:5,9,11,12 due 22:17	32:3,8,14,17	euthanizing	i	false 30:21 39:9
ane / /' /	32:25 33:3,6	35:25 55:9	executions 3:11	families 42:18
	•			
D.C 1:11,18,20 1:23	33:11,15,24 34:3,11,19,24	everybody 47:25	17:14 38:3,5 48:20 50:14	42:18

Farmer 47:18	followed 3:22	29:5 30:5	1:22 2:7 45:18	44:25
49:6	28:10 46:1	39:11,18,19,25	ground 40:23	holding 46:11
fatal 32:2	forbid 25:25	40:6 42:14	grounded 21:16	honest 41:12
favor 40:24	35:24	43:6,9,12	guarantee 4:11	honestly 50:22
feasibility 14:6	force 7:24 11:1	53:22	4:20 5:10	Honor 6:6 8:25
feasible 48:12	forced 47:22	given 10:17,23	13:14	14:19 17:19
49:15 50:4	foremost 51:7	29:14 57:10	guaranteed 8:1	19:24 22:9,10
Federal 20:5	forgive 56:14	giving 8:13	8:10	25:1 26:14,16
48:9 53:23	form 23:12,16	go 10:25 19:21	guidelines 35:22	28:21 29:12
54:2,6,8	24:13	25:3 30:15	guy 38:15	32:3 33:7,24
feet 30:3	found 7:22 9:3	32:19 37:11,12	Guy 50.15	34:11,19 41:19
figure 37:8	founding 21:20	42:22 43:2	H	54:2
filed 44:5	four 56:6	51:10 53:20	Haas 31:5	hospital 28:22
finality 48:24	frankly 9:5	goes 17:15 18:6	habeas 47:12	28:23 29:4
find 7:19 8:5	44:24	23:7 30:23	hand 13:12,15	hours 54:12
21:5 22:22	free 22:7 46:1	32:20 34:7	handy 56:15	human 8:16,16
38:7 51:4	friend 55:21	going 5:10 13:2	hanging 23:21	27:23 32:18
finding 36:6,11	front 53:16	19:21 35:17	24:1	38:13,23 44:6
38:24 40:10	full 51:2	41:20 43:17	Hanging's 24:8	44:7
43:9	fundamental	48:23 50:6	happen 17:21	humane 4:9
	46:7 57:3	51:14,14,24	31:22 44:25	11:12 22:6
findings 14:4,14		52:1,16 55:10	happened 38:7	34:22
15:3 16:21	further 30:11,15 52:16	good 7:22 24:8	happens 30:24	humans 9:18
52:9	future 46:10	36:2 41:9	Harbison 37:13	36:20
finds 55:24	10ture 40:10		hard 23:25 24:1	hurdle 49:21
fine 51:4	G	42:24 43:1,5	harm 16:5	hypothetically
Finish 57:6	G 1:22 2:7 3:1	43:24,25	Harmline 26:15	4:25
finishes 17:15	45:18	gotten 49:21	haves 31:2	4.23
firing 21:7	Gamble 46:16	government 20:2 48:9	hear 3:3	I
first 3:4,11	49:5		hearing 14:3	idea 36:2
21:19 27:2,4	Garre 1:22 2:7	53:23 54:3,6,8	51:2	identified 36:23
27:15,18 29:24	45:17,18,22	gram 8:10,13	heart 7:17	ignore 16:24
33:12,16 36:17	47:2,16 48:11	9:1 32:1,10	Heath 31:18	imagination
36:18 39:13		grams 4:7 8:14	56:11,18	53:18
46:8 49:17	48:16,21 49:11 50:1 51:6,13	8:14,15 18:12	held 44:9,19	impermissible
51:6	51:19 52:12	18:19 19:7,8	help 13:1	50:14
five 20:1 32:1,10	53:4,8,13,17	19:14,20,22	helpful 5:18	implemented
32:20,21 47:23	1	20:1 31:17	high 20:1	47:8
53:24 54:7	53:22,25 54:2	32:20,21 50:24	. –	important 4:2
fixed 20:24	54:11,14	53:24 54:5	higher 32:20	9:4 27:16,16
flaws 46:7	gasping 56:7 General 1:22	56:12,14,19	Highland 31:5 highlighted 29:8	42:20
flee 53:24		granted 25:6		
Florida 52:22	generally 8:17	great 53:20	Hiland 47:18	impose 49:14
flow 12:11 29:9	getting 52:5	greater 19:19	Hill 47:4,9	imposes 11:17
focus 27:16	Ginsburg 5:14	49:14 53:21	historical 21:23	impossible
focusing 20:16	5:21 12:3,13	Gregg-Woods	history 43:21	13:17
Fogel 41:24 follow 44:13	12:16,18 13:20 15:5 20:2,5	26:10	hold 6:18 41:10 42:6 44:11,21	improper 3:20 53:2
	1 15.5 70.75	GREGORY	1 476441171	1 3417

improperly	30:25 33:20	14:15 17:25	20:2,5,6,13,16	26:11
33:13	38:9 39:16	itch 39:9	21:3,24 22:13	Kennedy 4:16
improve 45:15	43:15,20,23	IV 4:15 13:22	22:15,20,25	4:22,24 15:4,9
inaccurate 7:1	44:16 54:5,12	27:21,24 28:22	23:4,5,11,16	15:18,22 31:8
inadequate 12:7	56:6	29:7,9,22 30:8	23:21,25 24:8	31:10 49:7,12
45:3	inmates 47:20	30:10,23 40:7	24:11,14,20	49:22 54:9
inadequately	inmate's 42:18	42:15 43:5	25:9,14,15,18	Kentucky 1:8
56:1	inned 36:19	IVs 28:24 29:1	25:21 26:21,25	6:13 7:2 13:18
inadvertent	inquiry 49:16	39:2,3 42:16	27:7,11 28:2,6	16:12 17:8
46:12,18	50:3	42:24	28:18 29:5	20:19 24:21
inches 30:4	insane 25:25		30:5 31:8,10	27:17,19,22,24
including 20:10	insert 29:1	J	31:25 32:5,8	29:12,16,19
22:9	inserted 28:24	January 1:12	32:12,16,22	35:5,8,16,16
increase 19:13	28:25 30:10	job 27:25 28:13	33:1,2,4,8,14	35:21,23 36:10
increases 10:23	inserts 13:21	40:17,25	33:22,25 34:6	39:2,23 40:17
increment 23:9	28:22 29:6	JOHN 1:7	34:17,21 35:4	40:25 41:13
indifference	30:8	joint 4:6 7:4	35:9,15,21	45:2 46:2
57:2	insist 13:5	28:12 30:25	36:3,15,22	54:20 55:20
indirectly 34:12	insofar 47:6	31:6,11,19	37:1,7,8,15,21	57:4
induce 3:15	instance 39:13	43:3 56:11	37:24,25 38:17	Kentucky's 3:10
ineffective 10:24	insufficient	JR 1:18,20 2:3,5	39:11,18,19,25	key 3:25 5:24
inferior 48:10	44:10,20	2:11 3:6 26:23	40:6,13,22	14:25 17:25
inflict 3:16 8:7	intended 29:25	54:16	41:6,11,20	kill 31:23 55:3
9:23,23 11:20	intent 26:1,4,9	judge 14:10	42:1,8,12,14	killing 21:11
11:21 21:22	26:11,12	24:21 41:24	43:6,9,12,17	kind 16:12
22:4 26:3	intentional 22:1	judgment 24:23	44:9,15,19	28:15 36:10,11
inflicted 23:6	interest 44:15	36:20	45:6,16,22	49:16 50:2
55:11	internal 52:20	jurisdiction	46:14,20 47:11	52:4 56:7
inflicting 23:1	interrupted	46:4	47:16 48:4,14	kinds 42:20
infliction 22:1	15:4	jurisdictions	48:16,17,25	53:19
22:16 23:9	introduce 17:2,7	19:25 54:5	49:7,12,22,23	know 4:25 9:19
26:7 46:13,13	introduced 17:5	Justice 1:23 3:3	50:5,7,15,17	11:8 16:6,17
46:18 49:19	22:5	3:8,19,24 4:5	51:12,23 52:3	24:2 29:2
inflicts 22:11	introduction	4:16,22,24	52:24 53:5,9	30:20 31:1
24:18 25:3	31:14	5:14,21 6:2,11	53:15,22 54:1	37:2 39:5 50:6
inform 38:4	invalidate 45:24	6:20,24 7:9,18	54:9,14,18	50:18
Information	invite 44:4	8:12 9:2,15,19	55:2,13 57:6,8	knows 34:7
7:24	involuntary	9:22,24 10:5,9	57:13	T
inherent 38:22	10:1,8,12 56:8	10:18,23 11:5	justification	L 17.20
inhumane 3:11	involved 35:10	12:3,6,13,16	33:8,15 44:10	Lancet 7:20
injection 3:10	involves 38:23	12:18,24 13:20	44:17,20,21	large 37:18
29:18,18 52:19	involving 7:14	14:2,13 15:4,5	justify 11:1	late 12:5
55:25	issue 11:3 13:11	15:9,18,21	44:10,20	law 35:5,8,16,22
injury 46:10	14:20 40:16	16:1,9,20 17:2	T/	35:23 36:4
inmate 3:14 4:3	45:1 48:3	17:12,20 18:2	<u>K</u>	39:23
5:6 28:16	51:17,20 52:10	18:5,15,18,21	keep 56:22	laws 46:3
29:13 30:2,18	issues 13:19	19:2,10,15	Kemmler 22:18	lay 39:7
1	1	1	l	1

lead 48:23	38:7 53:1,5,6	28:24 29:1	monthly 29:20	newly 50:12
learning 28:10	look 9:4,5 11:8	35:1 38:14	months 51:15	NG 44:8
leave 30:10,13	16:18 30:20	medically 6:10	Morales 41:24	nonexistent 4:4
41:1 42:15	38:1,2 39:5,6	13:11,13 17:3	55:24	nonpainful 7:17
leaves 42:2	45:4 48:12	17:6,10	morning 3:4	nonprofessional
led 55:11	50:3,9,10,12	members 42:15	31:16	39:15
left 8:2	looked 9:3	mentioned	movements 38:9	normal 32:11
legal 14:22	looking 4:6	31:15	muches 39:10	North 56:4
35:17	low 15:20 31:10	merely 35:10	muscle 10:1,8	noticeable 39:7
legislature	lung 47:25	40:16	10:12 11:9	nub 38:17
35:16 36:10		method 8:4 9:15	38:9	number 36:24
42:8	M	9:20 21:5,12	muscular 35:24	37:1 54:12
legislatures	main 12:4,6	21:16 22:3	T. T	56:15
42:10	30:21,22 36:18	45:25 46:2	N	nurse 12:22
legitimate 44:3	maintained	48:7,10,19	N 2:1,1 3:1	nurses 12:25
length 31:16	12:15	49:2,4,13	nationwide	39:24
37:5	major 52:20	50:13	17:13	
lethal 3:10 7:25	majority 38:6	methods 8:21	necessary 12:9	<u>O</u>
29:17,18 52:19	making 47:12	24:23 47:4	32:23 36:3	O 2:1 3:1
55:25 56:12,13	57:5	51:4	53:1 57:12	objection 20:10
lethality 56:10	maladministr	minimal 34:6	neck 24:3	objections 20:6
let's 4:17,24	11:22,23 20:15	minimum 38:22	need 16:3 38:14	obligation 57:11
31:19	mall 36:18,19	minutes 9:12	39:5	observation
level 31:14	manifests 4:14	34:18 37:8,14	needed 17:8	15:17 16:15
levels 15:20	manner 47:7	37:15,17 54:15	needle 28:19	observer 39:7
life 45:4	marker 54:25	mirror 30:16	needles 28:11	observers 44:16
likelihood 10:12	Marshall 46:15	42:23	needs 5:25 20:24	obviate 24:6
38:19,22	mas 36:20	misleading	36:10	obvious 28:2
line 27:21,24	massive 19:5,8	30:15	negligence 49:4	49:9
40:10 42:24	19:10	misphrase 49:8	53:2	obviously 25:6
43:1,5	matter 1:14 49:1	mix 20:9	negligent 46:12	36:5 40:21
lines 40:7 53:20	52:17 53:12,14	mixing 14:17	46:17 49:19	41:9
lingering 11:12	57:16	20:17,17 38:24	53:6	occur 8:25 9:10
11:15,17	McKinney	mode 25:8	Nelson 47:4,9	9:12 16:5
literally 27:22	47:19	modifications	Netherlands	18:23 19:19
30:1	MD 28:4	52:19	7:24 55:14,15	26:17 56:19
litigated 51:16	mean 12:4 13:1	moment 18:10	neuro 35:24	occurred 27:12
litigation 42:3	19:6 25:10	Monday 1:12	neuromuscular	odds 46:8
43:18,21 46:24	28:7 40:6	monitor 5:23	35:7	offering 10:15
48:23 49:24	50:17 54:9	12:10,12 15:23	never 9:16,17	okay 18:18 35:9
52:2	means 22:11	16:3 31:8	11:8 14:7 15:9	36:15 37:25
little 18:8 34:12	meant 19:7	monitoring 4:3	46:2 48:15	39:20 52:8
37:19	measures 12:20	5:12,15,19,25	55:9	once 30:10
live 47:23	15:7 31:20	14:18 15:1,6	nevertheless	48:19 50:2
logic 37:13	media 42:18	15:14,25 31:13	48:9	ones 22:10 29:1
long 11:11 32:7	medical 6:2,3,4	39:8 55:13	new 45:4,7	29:11
34:15,17 37:17	9:11 14:5	month 29:20	48:19 52:1,2	one-drug 13:8
37.13,17 37.17				

20.16	24.5.18.25.4	1.16.22	54.5	2.16
one-way 30:16	24:5,18 25:4	people 16:22	54:5	potassium 3:16
42:23	25:13,16 27:9	20:9 21:11	Pinetti 25:23	54:22 56:3
on-the-job	33:10,23 34:1	26:2 29:7,8,9	26:4	potential 4:13
28:10	34:4,5,8,13	29:23 30:6,8,9	place 26:6 27:17	10:16
open 41:1	36:19,19,20	39:4,15,22	27:20,24 29:13	practical 6:7,15
opened 42:16	37:16,19,20	40:3,6 42:17	33:16 39:3	16:23 51:5
operate 29:11	38:5,11,20	43:4 51:10,25	40:7 48:2	practically 4:4
opinion 41:9	41:16 45:10	people's 29:15	placed 42:16	practice 15:14
46:16	46:1,13,14,18	perceive 35:13	placement 14:17	26:17 29:19,20
opportunity	47:21 49:14,20	percent 4:18 5:1	places 19:3	29:24 35:10
51:7	55:11	5:5,17	28:11	36:4,8 40:4
oppose 50:7	painful 8:3	permissible	placing 39:1	46:4 50:6
opposed 18:9	16:23 21:9,12	41:10	40:10	precedence 46:9
47:15	21:15 22:22	persisted 48:9	plaintiff 45:7	precise 32:9
opposite 26:5	23:1 48:1	person 5:25	please 3:9 27:1	precisely 18:17
optimal 45:11	painless 24:12	15:17 16:4,5,6	45:23	21:21 26:15
oral 1:14 2:2 3:6	24:13,15 25:2	16:7,11 21:10	poem 38:10,10	prefer 34:9
26:23 45:18	25:10,12 27:3	25:25 28:11,22	38:10	preferability
order 32:24 46:1	painlessly 8:8	30:11 39:3,6	point 10:7 11:15	18:8 19:4
ordinary 26:17	pancuronium	40:12 47:24	12:25,25 13:7	preferable 6:16
ought 19:21	3:14 35:6	55:3,19 56:23	24:12,17 29:7	7:14 40:1
57:1,10	50:23 54:22	personnel 12:10	37:21,24 48:24	prescribed
outside 32:15	56:3	12:19,21 13:12	55:14	46:14
34:20 37:11	paralysis 3:15	13:13,16 14:5	pointed 12:6	present 5:2 51:8
outweigh 34:1	paralytic 35:7	17:3,6,10 39:8	points 14:25	52:1 55:7,8,16
35:13	part 5:12 6:12	39:12,21,22	21:17 28:13	pressure 15:13
outweighs 33:23	26:2 30:12,15	persuasive	37:23	15:20,24 31:8
overwhelming	48:11,14,17	40:23	polar 26:5	31:12,22
38:6	participate 6:1,5	Petitioner 8:9 51:24	policymaker 35:12	pressures 31:10 42:21
P	13:16,18	Petitioners 1:5	population	presumably
P 3:1	participating 13:14 54:24	1:19 2:4,12 3:7	27:25 28:1,12	22:5 36:1 45:6
pack 47:23	l	44:6 45:24	28:14,15,17	pretty 8:24
page 2:2 4:6 7:3	participation	1	Poretto 38:7	pretty 8.24 prevail 11:6
7:16 9:13	6:9 13:11	46:6 49:20	pose 3:10	prevent 10:1
28:12 31:11,19	29:23	51:21 52:13	^	prevent 10.1
46:16 56:10,12	particular 14:25	54:17	posed 26:15	1 *
56:14,14,15,17	particularly	Petitioner's	poses 7:7,11	principle 22:8 46:17
pages 30:24 31:5	11:2 14:20	41:22 48:22	position 14:3,23	1
43:3	33:1	phlebotomist	18:7 22:21	prison 27:25
pain 3:17,22 7:7	pass 36:4	27:24 28:4,7	23:6,11	28:1,11,14,15
9:20,23,23	penalty 8:17	phlebotomists	possibilities	probably 27:22 53:17
11:20,21,24	13:3 22:3 26:8	28:25	11:22 21:8	
12:2 20:25	38:3 43:21	PHOUFPLTs	52:25	problem 6:8
ł .	46:4 53:18	38:12	possibility 16:22	8:18,19,20
21:1,6 22:1,4	pentathol 20:10	physician 12:22	16:23 37:1,2,2	10:10 20:24,25
22:12,16,18,19	20:18	pick 39:14	possible 7:25	30:21,22 38:24
23:1,6,7,10,20	pentothal 4:8	picked 53:23	21:12,16 27:5	39:2 48:8
	<u> </u>		usano antikapian mana promosta si Surah komunikari kabansa Si	

50:11,13	18:1 19:17	8:19 12:19	REBUTTAL	render 12:9
problematic	20:7,8 21:9	15:22 18:3,5	2:10 54:16	54:11
32:14,19	24:21 31:16	21:21 23:25	received 32:6	repeated 52:18
problems 4:14	32:23 34:9,14	24:1 25:6 29:6	recollection	reply 9:13
15:6 16:15	34:15,16,22,23	34:12 40:14,16	19:3	report 50:23
28:1,16 55:23	36:9 40:15,18	40:20 41:2	recommend	representation
procedure 4:20	41:1,23 42:5	42:14 44:14	50:23	56:24
10:20 12:9	42:12,13 43:18	47:14 53:25	record 5:8,8	representing
13:6 20:19	43:23,25 44:10	56:18,25	6:14,17 8:8,23	43:23
44:12,22 56:21	44:21 52:21	questions 12:18	8:24 9:24	require 6:9 26:4
procedures 3:10	53:3,7,10	56:20	14:24 15:19	required 21:15
4:2 26:6 56:22	protocols 45:14	quite 26:5 50:8	17:24 18:25	35:4 42:9,11
proceeds 20:23	45:15 52:19	50:9,22	19:13,16,20,24	53:7
process 5:12 6:1	protocol's 4:1,2		30:4,21 31:9	requirement
12:23 13:14	provide 6:21	R	32:4,5,15	13:15 21:4
17:11 20:23	provided 9:13	R 3:1	34:20 35:25	25:12,14,16
27:22 33:22	providing 53:21	raise 7:12	37:11,12,13	26:9,11,12
34:7 38:23	proximity 30:18	raised 6:13,22	38:19 40:23	35:17 41:18
43:15 54:24	public 43:7	6:24 7:1,5 13:3	41:14 42:25	46:22
55:12,17	publicly 42:4	45:1	45:3 51:9	requirements
produced 16:25	punishment	RALPH 1:3	54:13 55:24	39:23
professional	12:1 21:2 26:3	range 14:15	56:25	requires 29:19
6:10 30:9,11	42:7 47:7,7	rapidly 32:10	rectify 23:4	46:6 50:11
40:2	50:8	rational 41:17	Red 28:19	53:3
proper 14:16	purpose 43:10	read 7:19,20,20	reduce 10:12	reserve 26:19
properly 3:21	43:14,14	7:22 8:5,21,22	Rees 1:7 3:4	residents 29:1
4:8,11,16,18	purposes 46:25	9:7	refer 9:8 55:14	resolve 52:10
5:1,6 27:3,4,8	47:11	readily 17:4	referee 7:21	respect 11:14
27:18 33:17	pushes 40:12	24:5,19	reference 56:15	13:10 14:15,22
38:14 40:19	pushing 29:22	ready 17:6	56:16	14:25 15:11
53:10	40:9,11	real 33:17 54:19	references 6:21	22:18 26:13
proposed 20:19	put 4:8 47:9	54:25,25	6:22 8:24 9:13	29:15,22 30:19
45:8 46:5	56:4	reality 10:5	referred 19:4	44:2 48:3 49:2
proposition 27:8	puts 27:20 28:19	really 18:6	29:3 55:22	55:9,20,24
proscribed	puzzling 30:6	24:22 26:5	56:17	56:6,1@25
46:19		38:18 39:2	reflects 30:4	respectfully
protect 43:20,24	Q	43:2 46:24	regard 16:20	3:24
44:1	qualifications	reason 10:15	46:24	Respondents
protected 42:21	40:2	20:8 35:18	regime 48:23	1:21,25 2:6,9
protecting 42:19	qualified 13:13	38:8 41:9	reiterated 46:17	8:9 26:24
44:15	13:16,21,22,24	42:15	reiterates 49:6	45:21
protocol 3:21,21	13:24 17:10	reasonable 15:2	relevant 14:20	response 20:5
3:24 5:24 6:16	27:23 39:3	36:9,14 37:17	relitigate 51:11	36:25 46:21
6:18 7:12,13	quantification	57:11	reluctant 17:12	48:25
10:3,11 11:7	37:22	reasons 10:19	remaining 54:15	responses 52:12
11:13,13,23	quarrel 43:13	39:17,19	remand 14:11	result 46:6
13:8 16:12	question 4:22	reassessed 52:18	15:1	results 11:23
		}		
the processor of the state of t	Contribution (Contribution Contribution)	of Early Committee with the Feather of Augustian State (September 1994)	al a series de abaix la relació el la relación y la relación de la relación de la relación de la relación de l	ipageal on a fill of the a large of a national analysis of the constitution of a code

Resweber 22:19	round 52:2	seen 42:17	single 6:8 7:13	stage 20:22
reviews 52:21	ROY 1:20 2:5	send 14:10	11:7 20:7	stake 45:5
rhetorically	26:23	17:12 50:21	34:13,21,24	standard 15:14
38:2	rule 41:7	51:1 52:7	45:11	21:16 22:11
right 15:8 20:4	run 17:10	sense 26:18	single-drug 34:9	36:4 45:9,11
23:22 25:18		sentence 7:23	situation 11:18	46:5 47:1,14
29:21 30:2	<u> </u>	9:6 57:7	26:1 55:18,19	47:17,22 48:2
33:14 35:15	s 2:1 3:1 8:9	sentences 21:22	six 55:25	48:5 49:7
50:5,18,19	37:19	separate 46:25	slap 16:7,10	50:16 51:3
51:14 53:3	safeguard 10:2	sequence 3:12	slate 36:2	57:2
55:22	31:8 49:22	series 56:20	sleep 31:3	start 27:20
Rights 44:6,7	safeguards	serious 8:18,20	slight 23:8	started 5:15
risk 3:22 4:21	27:17,20 29:13	25:5 29:6	small 55:23	state 13:10
5:7,17 7:7,11	33:16 52:23	44:11,22	smoker 47:23	17:16 18:6
8:16,16 10:17	saying 5:16	serves 43:10,14	sodium 4:7	30:7 36:2 39:3
10:24 11:2	51:21	sessions 29:19	20:10,18 31:17	42:4 46:1 48:8
14:16,17,17	says 7:23 9:9	29:20,24 40:4	31:21 50:24	54:19
22:7 23:20	13:4 22:19	set 13:19 22:4	Solicitor 1:22	states 1:1,15,24
24:4,6,7 25:3	31:7 38:15	setting 4:15	solid 21:17	2:8 17:9 21:15
27:9,12 33:10	56:11,12,16	28:24 29:4	solves 6:8	22:1,2 23:13
33:12,18,23,25	Scalia 6:2 16:1,9	35:11,15 56:23	somebody 16:18	26:6 45:12,19
34:1,3,4,6,8,12	16:20 17:2,12	settings 4:12	28:7,18,19	46:5 52:16,18
34:13 37:16,18	17:20 21:3,24	SEUG 36:12	38:13 55:5,12	52:20 55:20
37:20,22 39:4	22:13,15,20,25	seven 56:1	somewhat 29:3	state's 56:16
41:16 45:10	23:4,5,21,25	severe 24:18	35:2	stayed 48:20
46:9 47:17,20	24:8,11,14	shaking 16:7,11	soon 43:18	staying 42:22
47:21,24,24	25:9,14,15,18	shortage 53:18	sort 46:23,25	step 27:21 46:3
48:5 49:3,3,13	25:21 48:14,17	show 7:1 17:3	Souter 14:2,13	steps 3:25 57:12
50:16,20 52:14	49:23 50:7,15	25:10 31:9	18:2,5,15,18	STEUPBer
53:1,2,6,11	52:24 53:5,9	49:2,12	18:21 19:2,10	36:19
54:19 55:17	53:15	showed 38:9	19:15 28:2,6	Stevens 27:7,11
57:12	screaming 31:1	shown 52:14	28:18 35:4,9	31:25 32:5,8
risks 3:25 9:20	31:4	shows 6:15	35:15 36:3,15	32:12,16,22
35:13	scut 29:3	17:25 25:23	36:22 37:7,15	33:1,4,8,14,22
risky 48:7	se 13:3	30:21	37:21,24,25	33:25 34:6,17
ROBERTS 3:3	sea 8:2	side 13:4 16:2	38:17 46:20	34:21 37:1,8
3:19 4:5 9:15	second 3:14 9:25	38:12	47:11,17 51:12	40:13,22 41:6
	12:19 15:10,11	side's 18:16	51:23	41:11,20 42:1
9:19,24 10:9 10:18 11:5	18:22 22:8	sight 42:24 43:1	so-called 38:2	42:8,12 44:9
	29:14 32:23	significant 5:7	39:21 55:21	44:15,19
20:6,16 26:21	33:9,19 36:12	24:7 38:19	speaking 38:1	stopping 7:17
35:21 45:6,16	36:17,21 41:2	50:20 51:22	speaking 38.1 specific 47:14	strange 42:6
54:1,14 55:2	41:10,15 43:10		specifically	strange 42.0 strong 37:2
57:6,13	44:17 52:15	silly 43:19	20:17 28:17	41:13 46:18
room 30:10,14	Secondly 19:2	similarly 56:4		1
30:16 39:14	Section 47:3	simply 3:24 18:8	spend 47:23	struggling 56:7 studies 7:20
42:16,17,22,23 43:3,5	see 24:18	31:13 37:22	squad 21:8 SRAEUB 38:14	8:21 55:25
71 4 1 4 5	1 300 44.10	51:17	LOKALUD 38:14	1 0.21.33:23

study 7:20,22	29:13,24 30:7	25:8	51:16	trained 5:25
subject 11:7,12	30:17 33:16	testified 8:10	thought 4:5 8:14	6:10 12:10,19
24:17 42:20	44:13 48:1	16:17 18:16	15:19 29:5	12:21,22 13:12
46:25	51:23	30:24 31:6,12	three 6:18 8:10	13:16 14:1
i i		37:14	8:13,14,14 9:1	15:17 17:3,6
subjected 23:24	surgery 16:2 55:4		11:13 18:12,19	29:7 30:6
submitted 6:25		testimony 9:9,11 15:16 17:25	19:7,8,14,20	39:12,21,21
57:14,16	surgical 56:21	39:10 43:4	19:7,8,14,20	54:23 55:5,13
substantial 4:21	swelling 39:6		24:21 31:17	55:16,19
34:3,4 46:9	syringe 29:11	testing 16:11 thank 26:21	32:10 34:23	training 13:23
47:17,24 48:5	syringes 14:18		38:7 50:25	13:25 14:6
49:13 50:18	system 56:4	45:15,16,22		28:6,8,9 29:2
52:24 53:11	T	54:13,14,18	52:19,21 54:5	29:10,15,16,23
substantiality	T 1:20 2:1,1,5	57:8,13	54:7,15 56:12	38:15
46:22		therapeutic	56:19	
substantially	26:23 36:5 take 8:13 10:3	43:10	three-drug 3:12	transcript 9:12
52:14		thing 14:10 15:2	5:23 6:16 7:12	trial 7:4,5,10
successful 5:11	17:17 28:2,8	18:17 38:10	18:9 32:23	14:6,10,14
suffering 7:8	31:20 32:18	49:25 56:16	40:15 41:23	16:20 17:13,14
suffice 5:15	36:6 37:7,14	things 10:7 17:4	42:5,12,13	42:25 45:1
sufficient 7:11	38:1,2 45:4	38:7 47:2 51:2	three-gram	tried 5:22 9:16
11:1 18:13	50:3,9,10	think 4:1 5:22	18:22 31:21	9:17 11:8
sufficiently	57:11	6:21 7:10 8:23	three-quarters	20:14 50:4
14:24,24 39:9	taken 9:6 52:20	8:24 9:8,21	22:2	troubled 41:14
54:25	takes 11:11 16:7	10:18 11:14,15	threshold 46:9	troubles 42:3
suffocation 3:15	34:15 37:6	11:19 12:3	49:1,17,24	true 4:10,25
suggest 5:22	44:2	13:7 14:7	50:1	14:13 53:17
17:19 23:18	talk 13:2	15:21 16:13	time 4:20 5:1,5	54:21
38:12	talking 8:1,17	17:5,11 18:11	21:20 23:17	truly 45:10
suggested 17:22	9:3 11:16 23:8	19:5 21:17	26:1,20 33:5	try 10:12
27:19 30:2,20	23:9 25:11	22:6 24:17	34:15 37:5	trying 13:5
suggestion	Task 7:24	25:9 26:18	38:7 44:2 56:3	14:11 36:5
30:14	teach 29:1	30:6 37:9	56:3	turn 44:6
suggests 43:22	team 13:21,22	40:14,19 41:12	times 45:14	twitching 56:8
sun 31:2	29:21 30:8	46:21 47:16	tissue 30:23	two 4:7 8:14
support 6:23	40:1,3 42:15	48:11,22 49:16	today 23:13	12:18 15:5
44:5	42:19	49:20 50:25	41:21 47:2	37:1 43:25
supportable	tell 5:19 20:8	51:19,20 52:2	told 20:3 36:1	49:24 50:1
47:13	31:2 38:15	52:7,13	tolerated 55:1	52:12 56:14
supported 39:1	44:24	thinking 8:15	top 30:2	types 47:9 48:3
supporting 1:24	Tennessee 52:21	thiopental 3:13	torture 11:17	typically 51:10
2:9 45:21	term 19:5	7:14 8:1,6 9:1	21:25	
suppose 36:10	terms 25:7	10:6 31:18,21	torturous 21:22	U
supposed 9:7	41:17	50:24 56:10,11	23:7,10,20	ultimately 17:16
suppress 10:7	terribly 41:14	third 3:16 15:23	24:5 55:11	UN 44:7
supreme 1:1,15	terrifying 3:15	18:22 29:14	totally 41:17	uncertainty
17:16 45:2	test 14:22 23:19	THOMAS 1:3	tracking 15:24	51:1
sure 19:23 27:17	23:24 24:18	thoroughly	tradition 34:25	unclear 39:11
		,		1
	I	The state of the s		nga ang kabangan di sakangan kanakan di kabangan di sakan di sakan di sakan di sakan di sakan di sakan di saka

l l				56.0
unconscious	21:2 25:10,11	26:22 27:2,19	watching 30:17	56:8
16:6,19 54:12	26:3,13,15,18	31:7,15 40:8	30:18 39:5	wouldn't 4:21
unconsciousn	upheld 25:4	43:19 54:15,16	way 4:8,19 5:16	10:2 11:18
15:15,25 16:3	use 9:1 11:19	54:18 55:8	5:18,20,23	17:20 20:12
54:10,11	13:20 15:7,12	57:8	15:24 20:10	25:5 31:23
unconstitutio	22:3 31:7,9	veterinarians	22:6,22 23:1	51:15 53:12
6:19 7:13	34:21,24 35:6	36:1 55:11	25:3 26:16	write 41:8
44:12,23 45:12	35:24 36:5,21	veterinary 35:1	32:15 34:10,19	wrong 20:9 23:7
uncontradicted	41:2,10 45:13	35:10,11 36:4	35:19 37:9	25:3 30:17,22
14:25	54:22,22 57:9	36:8	41:9 49:11	36:23 48:22
understand 8:2	usefulness 31:13	vets 35:19	51:18 52:5	55:6,10
10:22 17:18	uses 27:22,24	victim's 42:17	53:20 54:20	wrote 46:15
32:16 33:14	42:5,5	view 15:3 43:5	ways 7:17 13:10	X
42:9		violate 23:14,17	website 38:4	
understanding	· V	27:13	weighed 36:20	x 1:2,10
16:13 18:7	v 1:6 3:4 46:15	violates 24:21	well-trained	Y
19:2 32:17	47:18,19 49:5	virtually 4:9	30:9	year 51:15 53:16
55:15	49:6	6:14 56:13	went 28:3 55:6	year 31.13 33.10 years 17:17
understood 24:2	vein 30:23 38:8	virtue 13:24	We'll 3:3	28:15 45:13
undertaken	38:16 40:11	52:15,15	we're 14:4 21:23	52:20
20:18	veins 3:18 28:7	visible 43:7	23:8,9 25:11	32.20
undetected	28:16	visitors 41:4	41:20	Z
10:25	ventilators	visual 15:17	we've 49:11	zero 40:8
undeveloped	56:22	16:15	whatsoever	Zimmer 7:22
51:9	VERILLI 18:4	vote 57:12	16:12 19:18	Zaminoi 7.22
undignified	Verrilli 1:18 2:3		38:11	0
11:10 34:1	2:11 3:5,6,8,19	W	Wilkerson	07-5439 1:6 3:4
undisputed	3:23 4:10,19	wait 41:6 51:17	22:18	
17:24 18:11,15	4:23 5:3,21 6:6	want 16:4 17:20	Wilkinson 26:11	1
18:24 48:6	6:20 7:3,15 8:6	33:4 34:9	willing 50:8,10	10 34:18 37:8
unethical 13:1	8:23 9:8,17,21	50:15 52:4	wind 51:18	10:03 1:16 3:2
United 1:1,15,24	10:4,14,22	55:3,5	witnesses 33:21	100 4:18,25 5:5
2:8 23:13	11:14 12:3,12	wanted 48:24	43:16	5:17 29:19
45:19 46:5	12:14,17,21	wanton 22:15,16	wondered 28:3	40:4
unlawful 54:20	13:7,23 14:2	warden 16:16	word 7:10,14	105 46:16
unnecessary 7:7	14:13 15:8,11	16:16 29:25	50:18,19	11 55:25
22:12,15,16,18	1	30:1,19,19	words 5:15	11:05 57:15
22:12,13,10,10	16:10 17:1,5	31:1,1 39:9	work 17:15 20:9	
25:13,15 41:17		warranted	29:3 37:3	18 9:13 51:15
45:10 46:13	18:16,19,25	52:23	45:14 50:6,24	1983 47:3,12
unpleasant 33:5	19:8,11,23	Washington	worked 4:20	1998 29:17
33:7	20:4,13,21	1:11,18,20,23	worker 28:19	
unpleasantness	21:14 22:8,14	wasn't 7:21 25:2	working 28:15	2
41:3	22:17,23 23:3	26:7 29:6	38:15 56:9	2008 1:12
untrained 16:16		37:12 45:1	works 27:25	210 43:3
16:16	24:4,10,16,25	watch 30:16	28:7,13	220 45:13
unusual 12:1	25:13,17,19,22	l .	worried 50:21	26 2:6
unusuai 12.1				
	Care to the care to the control of the care to the car	gan nagotine co o consenio soco contrato	udigas (1838), gada (ada da arangan karangan karangan karangan karangan karangan karangan karangan karangan ka	and the state of t

273 28:12 286 43:3 287 43:3 3 2:4 30 28:11 37:14 37:15,17 353 31:5			de paragraphic de contraction de la contraction
386 31:5 4 42 56:10 45 2:9 493 4:6 494 4:6 56:12 499 31:19 56:17 5 54 2:12			
578 31:11 6 600 30:24 601 30:24 684 7:3 7 7 1:12 701 7:16	,		
			all with the section of a laboratory and a section of the section