

Terry Lenamon on the Death Penalty

Sidebar with a Board Certified Expert Criminal Trial Attorney



Terence M. Lenamon is a Florida Bar certified expert in the area of criminal trial law. With over 17 years experience he has built a reputation as one of Florida's most respected criminal defense lawyers. His defense has been sought by many high-profile clients and has led him through 20 first-degree murder trials and eight death penalty cases. That experience has brought him national recognition as a go-to commentator on death penalty issues. He is the force behind both deathpenaltyblog.com and Florida Capital Resource Center (floridacapitalresourcecenter.org), and can be reached at terry@lenamonlaw.com.

Arizona Uses Foreign Drug in Execution of Jeffrey Landrigan With U.S. Supreme Court Okay

POSTED ON OCTOBER 28, 2010 BY **TERRY LENAMON**

Two nights ago (on Tuesday), **Arizona executed Jeffrey Landrigan by lethal injection** after the United States Supreme Court (5-4) okayed going forward, even though there is a national shortage of sodium thiopental, one of the three drugs used in the lethal injection "cocktail" that is used to kill the condemned man.

Sodium thiopental works as an anesthetic, preventing pain and inducing sleep. Legally, that's important because the federal constitution prohibits cruel and unusual punishment, right?

Problem is, as we've written about before, there's a shortage of sodium thiopental in this country – and some states are stopping their executions because they don't have the drug to use. Arizona's answer to the shortage? Buy overseas.

Jeff Landrigan's lawyers sought relief from the U.S. Supreme Court under the argument that the foreign source meant that the drug might or might not meet American drug standards and therefore, only domestic or federally approved drugs should be used in executions.

The High Court disagreed, opining that "...[t]here is no evidence in the record to suggest that the drug obtained from a foreign source is unsafe ... speculation cannot substitute for evidence

that the use of the drug is ‘sure or very likely to cause serious illness and needless suffering.’” [\(Read the Order here.\)](#)

So, Arizona [apparently used a British drug](#) to execute Jeffrey Landrigan on Tuesday. [This would be the first execution on American soil using a foreign drug as a means of execution.](#)

What happens next? Texas crosses to a border town for a quick batch of knock-out drugs when it runs out of sodium thiopental in a couple of months?