

Gov. Brown issues pardons, reduces sentences

Staff and wire reports

Gov. Jerry Brown on Saturday announced pardons or sentence reductions for some 150 convicted criminals, continuing a tradition of timing his decisions around major Christian holidays including Christmas.

In all, he pardoned 132 people and commuted the sentences of 19. That included pardons for about 60 people convicted of making, selling or possessing drugs, including marijuana.

Criminals who request pardons must have completed their sentences and shown that they are reformed.

Those winning commutations included Candace Lee Fox.

Fox, 57, took part in a 1984 robbery and killing. She agreed to plead guilty to second-degree murder and testify against accomplices. In return, a Los Angeles County prosecutor said in court that she could be paroled in 7 1/2 years with good behavior. But the law required that she serve at least 10 years.

Fox won a new trial but was convicted in 1992 of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison without parole. A federal appeals panel upheld her sentence last year but two of the judges said the state should consider clemency.

"If the state had kept its word, Fox would have been released from prison over two decades ago," wrote Judge Stephen Reinhardt.

Brown commuted her sentence to 15 years to life, giving her a chance for parole. He noted that Fox has

been a model prisoner, and one of her accomplices was paroled years ago.

Among those pardoned was Kimberly Joyce Carter, labeled a hero by CNN for her work with the homeless.

Carter turned her life around after years of addiction and homelessness that included working as a pro-

stitute and serving prison time for petty crimes.

She entered a rehabilitation program and after her release in the mid-1990s founded the Time for Change Foundation, which assists homeless women with housing, counseling and job training and tries to reunite them with their children.

Pardons don't erase the convictions, but state and federal law enforcement agencies are informed and the pardons are public records.

California's longest-serving governor has now issued 1,463 pardons, including 404 during his first two terms as governor from 1975 to 1983.

Brown's father, Edmund G. "Pat" Brown had 467 pardons and 55 commutations, but there have been long stretches of very few. From 1991 through 2010, former Govs. Pete Wilson and Gray Davis issued no pardons, while Arnold Schwarzenegger handed out just 15.

What follows is a list of Southern California criminals who received reduced sentences — and the good deeds they performed to merit the reduction.

The Associated Press and staff writers Louis Casiano, Brian Day, Imran Ghori, Alicia Robinson and Beatriz E. Valenzuela contributed to this report

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