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Missouri Judge Grants Stay of Execution

ST. LOUIS (AP) - A federal judge has granted a stay of execution for Missouri death row inmate John Winfield, less than a week before his scheduled execution.

U.S. District Judge Catherine Perry issued the ruling Thursday. It wasn't immediately clear if the state planned to appeal. Messages seeking comment from the Missouri Attorney General's office and the Missouri Department of Corrections were not immediately returned.

Winfield was scheduled to die at 12:01 a.m. Wednesday for killing two St. Louis County women in 1996.

One of several court appeals on his behalf cited concerns that a corrections department employee who initially wanted to write a clemency letter on Winfield's behalf decided not to after intimidation by prison officials.

Associated Press