

Supreme Court OKs lethal injections, Crist applauds decision

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TALLAHASSEE — A moratorium on lethal injection is effectively lifted due to a ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court today upholding the use of the lethal drug cocktail in Kentucky.

The ruling effectively lifts the moratorium imposed by the court on states, including Florida, that use the three-drug mixture to execute death row inmates.

"It would appear that way," said Gov. Charlie Crist, who has signed one death warrant since taking office last year.

Crist said he was "grateful" for the court's decision.

Crist signed a death warrant for convicted child killer Mark Schwab, who was scheduled to be executed in November. The Supreme Court's last-minute ruling stopped that execution and the U.S. Supreme Court is still considering Schwab's case.

Despite that, Crist said he plans to review other death row cases and possibly sign another warrant.

Crist's staff is compiling "a short list of among those that are eligible that are among the most heinous of cases for me to consider to sign an additional death warrant," the governor said.

Crist said he will consider the length of time on death row and the egregiousness of the crime.

"Justice delayed is justice denied and an awful lot of families of the victims have been waiting for justice to be done. That's certainly an important factor. But in addition, the heinous nature of the crime itself is important to consider, too," he said.