

# Californians may get opportunity to vote on death penalty

By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee

Douglas Scott Mickey crept into the rural Placer County home of Eric Lee Hanson and Catherine Blount after midnight on Sept. 29, 1980.

Angry over a drug dispute he had with Hanson and looking for money, Mickey bludgeoned the sleeping 29-year-old man with a baseball bat and slit his throat ear to ear. He then turned his attention to Blount, 29, stabbing her seven times in the chest.

Convicted of both killings, Mickey has been on San Quentin's death row since 1983, fighting his case through the courts.

There is little chance that he will face lethal injection any time soon. Court battles have brought executions in California to a halt, and on Thursday a group of death penalty opponents said they had passed a milestone toward abolishing capital punishment in the state altogether.

The SAFE California Campaign said it has collected about 800,000 signatures to get a measure on the November ballot to transfer the sentences of death-penalty inmates to life without the possibility of parole.

**Read the whole story**