

# Haine Announces Opposition to Parole for Sims

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
August 30 2021 3:45 PM



EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County State’s Attorney Haine announced today that his office will oppose the granting of parole to Paula Sims following a commutation issued by Governor Pritzker in March that makes her sentence parole-eligible.

In 1990, Sims was convicted of first-degree murder by a Madison County jury for the death of her six-week-old daughter, Heather, in 1989. She also pled guilty to obstructing justice in the death of her 13-day-old daughter, Lorelei, in 1986. Sims was sentenced to a term of life in prison and has since admitted to killing both daughters.

“This sentence was, and still is, fully warranted based on the facts of this case and the murder of her two innocent baby girls,” Haine stated in the opposition memo. “There is no one left from the immediate family to speak on behalf of the two murdered infants whose lives were ended far too soon by the defendant’s intentional actions. The Madison County State’s Attorney’s office will speak for them and ask the Prison Review Board to deny Parole for Paula Sims.”



Following her conviction, Sims has raised the issue of postpartum depression to seek executive clemency and eliminate her life sentence. In 1994, she filed a post-conviction petition alleging that her trial counsel failed to provide adequate representation as he did not pursue an insanity defense based on postpartum depression. The court denied this petition, and the denial was affirmed by the Appellate Court for the Fifth District.

“The defendant’s shifting story offers the Prison Review Board no reason to grant her parole and overturn this life sentence,” Haine added in the memo. “Rather than follow the defendant down this rabbit hole, the Prison Review Board and Governor should trust the judgment of the jury of the defendant’s peers and the multiple judges and courts that have reviewed this case.”

Sims is currently in custody at the Logan Correctional Center, and her interview with the Prison Review Board is scheduled for September 16. A public hearing will be held at a future date.

**(This is a summary of the beginning and end of a letter issued to the Illinois Prisoner Review Board from Tom Haine and the Office of the State's Attorney)**

**MADISON COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

**August 30, 2021**

**Illinois Prisoner Review Board**

**Chairman Craig Findley**

**319 East Madison Street, Suite A**

**Springfield, Illinois 62701**

**RE: B07074 PAULA SIMS**

**THOMAS A. HAINE  
STATE'S ATTORNEY**

Case No.: 89CF552 (Madison County)

Crime: Murder (Life), Concealment of Homicidal Death (5 years), Obstructing Justice (3 years) Sentencing Date: February 5, 1990 (Murder), March 30, 1990 (Concealment and Obstructing)

**Greetings:**

"This Office has received notice of parole hearing for Paula Sims, Inmate #B07074. We strongly oppose the granting of parole for Ms. Sims on behalf of the two child victims in the case, Heather and Lorelei Sims. Simply put, Defendant's conveniently timed (and previously litigated) psychological explanations for the murder (now admitted, then

denied) of two of her baby children provide no basis to overturn her life sentence and give her parole.

"As Justice Kuehn put it: "Paula J. Sims gave birth to three children, but she was a mother to only one.

"Rather than nurture her two baby girls, she killed them." *People v. Sims*, 322 Ill. App. 3d 397, 399 (Ill. App. Ct. 2001). The PRB and Governor should trust the judgment and sentence of the Court who heard all the relevant facts in the case and observed the demeanor of the Defendant. Paula Sims's life sentence, imposed for murdering her two infant daughters, should be allowed to stand.

"In 1990, Defendant was convicted after a jury trial for one count of First Degree Murder of her six-week-old daughter at the Heather Sims trial. Evidence was introduced showing that she was guilty. She was also responsible for the murder of her other daughter Lorelei Sims in 1986. At a sentencing hearing, Defendant was spared the death penalty and sentenced to a term of life in prison.

"This sentence was - and still is - fully warranted based on the facts of this case and the murder of her two innocent baby girls. Though she killed her daughters, she did not kill her son. But he and the father of Heather and Lorelei Sims have since died as a result of a motor vehicle crash.

"There is no one left from the immediate family to speak on behalf of the two murdered infants whose lives were ended far too soon by the Defendant's intentional actions. Therefore, the Madison County State's Attorney's Office will speak for them. We ask the Prison Review Board to deny parole for Paula Sims."

"Defendant claims that because of her post-partum depression, she thought she was telling the truth when at trial she denied killing her children and blamed their deaths on a masked intruder. The trial was approximately four years after the first murder and almost a year after the second murder. Still, Defendant claims that due to her psychological condition she was absolutely convinced that the two abductions actually occurred.

"Suddenly, and conveniently turned after a jury had convicted her, and just before they could vote to give her the death penalty, she admitted guilt and sought mercy, thereby barely avoiding the death penalty. But Defendant claims that while she admitted she killed her two baby children and trying to avoid the death penalty, she still didn't believe her own story. There is an alternative and more plausible explanation: Defendant is

lying again, just like she has lied so many times in the past, to avoid taking responsibility for murdering her two infant daughters and to avoid spending time in prison for her crimes."

Haine added to close his request: "Defendant's shifting and farfetched psychological story offer the Prison Review Board no clear reason to grant her parole and overturn her life sentence. Rather than follow the Defendant down this rabbit hole, the Prison Review Board and Governor should trust the judgment of the jury of Defendant's peers and the multiple judges and courts that have previously reviewed this case. Therefore, on behalf of the people of Madison County, I request the PRB and Governor reject her clemency position and let Paula Sims serve out the rest of her life in prison, a just sentencing for murdering her two innocent daughters."