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The Star Press

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President Donald Trump shows a pardon he signed for businessman Devon Archer, a former business partner of Hunter Biden, in 2025. Trump's second-term clemency has saved convicted defendants nearly \$1.7 billion in forgiven financial obligations, according to House Democrats. MANDEL NGAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Trump clemency erases \$1.7 billion in penalties

White-collar criminals dodge fines, restitution

Caren Morrison
Georgia State University
THE CONVERSATION

President Donald Trump loves a good pardon. His generosity is so well known, in fact, that an industry of lobbyists, lawyers and other insiders has reportedly sprung up to facilitate clemency for wealthy criminals. Clemency, meaning mercy or leniency, lets the president reduce the punishment for, or even forgive, federal crimes.

For defendants hoping to avoid jail and walk away from millions of dollars in financial sanctions, paying, say, \$600,000 to a lobbying firm to influence the president may seem like a good investment.

House Democrats recently reported that Trump's second-term clemency – which includes both pardons, which

The U.S. Constitution grants the president nearly unbounded power to pardon whomever he likes, whenever he likes and for whatever reason he likes. BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES FILE

wipe away every part of a conviction, and commutations, which typically leave convictions intact but shorten a person's sentence – has saved convicted defendants nearly \$1.7 billion in forgiven financial obligations.

Some of that amount – about \$700 million – had not yet been officially imposed by courts because the clemency

came through so quickly. Much of the remaining \$1 billion had been ordered as restitution, meant to repay victims' losses.

As a legal scholar researching the evolution of modern presidential clemency, I have reviewed every individual

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Jury finds Muncie father guilty

Charges stem from fatal shooting

Douglas Walker
Muncie Star Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Muncie man on Tuesday, Oct. 13, was convicted of charges stemming from his daughter's shooting death.

Jacob Curtis Grayson, 32, was charged with neglect of a dependent resulting in death, a Level 1 felony carrying up to 40 years in prison, and three other counts of neglect of a dependent, a Level 6 felony with a maximum 30-month sentence.

The jury deliberated for nearly eight hours before returning with the guilty verdicts. Delaware Circuit Court 5 Judge Thomas Cannon Jr. set sentencing for Nov. 12.

Testimony indicated Grayson's 5-year-old daughter, Crystal, was fatally shot in the head on July 26, 2022, after her 6-year-old brother removed a loaded handgun from a safe in their parents' bedroom.

Deputy prosecutors Eric Overpeck and Michael Bozoian said Grayson and his wife, Kimberly, failed to take proper steps after the boy had accessed the safe on earlier occasions.

On March 14, another Circuit Court 5 jury found Kimberly Grayson, now 31, guilty of the same four charges.

However, on May 1, Kimberly Grayson's attorney, Sam Beasley, filed a motion that questioned both her ability to assist him in preparing for her sentencing, and whether she had been competent to stand trial on the felony neglect charges.

Beasley reported that Grayson's "language and communication skills seemed equivalent to those of a young child."

Cannon later ruled Kimberly Grayson "presently lacks the ability to understand the proceedings and to assist in the sentencing process" and committed her to the state's division of mental health and addiction for "competency restoration services."

In a statement issued late Tuesday night, Delaware County Prosecutor Eric Hoffman said, "The facts of this case and the utter disregard for the safety of these young children make me want to

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Ball State plans weeklong Homecoming centennial celebration

Jane Imbody
Muncie Star Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Ball State University will mark the 100th anniversary of Homecoming with a week of events from Oct. 19 to 24 that culminates with the Cardinals' football

game against Sacramento State at Scheumann Stadium.

The celebration's theme is "Chirping Through the Decades," according to a community announcement. The milestone honors a century of Homecoming traditions while recognizing the students, alumni, faculty, staff and sup-

porters who continue to shape the university's annual gathering.

Ball State's first Homecoming took place Nov. 18, 1926, when alumni returned to campus for a day that included a bonfire, pep rally and dance. Since then, the event has expanded into a weeklong tradition featuring attractions

such as the Homecoming Parade, Bed Race, Air Jam, tailgating and football.

"For 100 years, Homecoming has brought generations of Cardinals back to Ball State to reconnect, celebrate and create new memories together," said

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