

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 17, 2026



North Carolina General Assembly Formally Changes Commission Name

The legacy North Carolina Innocence Inquiry Commission wishes to officially announce the adoption of its new name, **The North Carolina Post-conviction Review Commission** (NCPRC), by act of the North Carolina General Assembly on July 7, 2026.

Since the creation of the NCPRC in 2007, over 4,300 claims have been submitted to and reviewed by Commission staff. The Commission has held 20 hearings. Sixteen individuals, who spent more than 300 years in prison collectively for crimes they did not commit, have now been exonerated because of the Commission's investigations.

In March 2025, members of the North Carolina Senate voted to eliminate the Commission, citing the lack of need for such an organization when other innocence projects already existed. Only two weeks later, in early April 2025, Mr. Clarence Roberts was exonerated following a hearing before a Three Judge Panel. The three Superior Court Judges voted unanimously that Mr. Roberts had shown clear and convincing evidence that he was factually innocent of the crimes for which he had been wrongfully convicted. Mr. Roberts' case evidences the continued benefit the Commission delivers to North Carolina not only through the exonerations of wrongly convicted individuals, but also in the confirmations of guilt.

The Commission, as defined by statute, is an *extraordinary* independent and neutral state agency designed to review, investigate and determine credible claims of factual innocence. The Commission's new name, therefore, more accurately reflects its role within the North Carolina criminal justice community.

The North Carolina Post-conviction Review Commission would like to thank its supporters who came out in both force and numbers to support the PRC's continued existence. We wish to also recognize the other stakeholders in the criminal justice system who spoke forthrightly about the Commission's appropriate place within it. The Commission's relevancy and benefit have assuredly not ceased but rather will continue under a new title, but with the same dedication, determination, integrity and acumen as it has served the citizens of North Carolina for the previous almost two decades.