

J. Kevin Stitt
Governor



Tom Bates
Executive Director

State of Oklahoma
PARDON AND PAROLE BOARD

September 22, 2025

The Honorable Richard Miller
Chairman, Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board
4345 North Lincoln, Blvd., Suite 1082
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Judge Miller,

Please accept this letter as my formal resignation as Executive Director of the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board, effective November 30, 2025.

I look back on my tenure leading the agency with a great deal of pride in what we have accomplished together over the last five years:

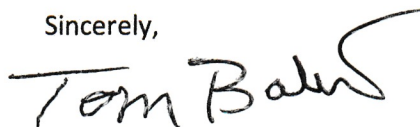
- Resolved a backlog of 3,000 pending commutation applications;
- Docketed parole hearings for 27,638 offenders brought into DOC custody;
- Processed and reviewed 15,564 parole cases, 4,921 cases on the SIR docket, 3,674 cases on the administrative parole docket, 3,396 commutations, and 1,297 pardons;
- Successfully transitioned to ICON, leading to greater automation and consistency in the generation of reports, and reducing the average time to produce parole certificates from 15 days to just five;
- These efficiencies have also allowed us to reduce our staff by two positions—one administrative and one investigative;
- Even with this reduction, we have successfully brought the generation of pre-pardon investigation reports back in-house from DOC, relieving a burden on our sister agency;
- Completed full revisions of our administrative rules, policies, and our investigators' handbook;
- Improved our SharePoint platforms resulting in the processing of pardon applications online, as well as same-day access to dockets and reports for board members.

When I joined the agency, we were in the midst of a moratorium on executions. Since that moratorium was lifted, we have held 18 clemency hearings. Each of these cases involved unique and complex issues, and many have led to significant open records requests and litigation. If I take personal satisfaction in anything during my time in this role, it is that we consistently and successfully defended the independence and integrity of this institution in the performance of its constitutional duties—despite numerous challenges.

These accomplishments are not mine. They belong to the board members and to the dedicated staff I have been privileged to lead—particularly our executive staff: Melinda Romero, Kyle Counts, and Leroy Long. They are a great team, and it has been my distinct honor to work with them.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for your leadership, and your fellow board members for their service. This is not easy work, but it is so very important. It has been a pleasure to work with each of you, and to call you my friends. I look forward to crossing paths in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Bates". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping "T" and a stylized "B".

Tom Bates

Director

Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board