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Scots to rule soon on Lockerbie bomber -lawmaker

LONDON, Aug 19 (Reuters) - A decision by the Scottish government whether to release a Libyan convicted of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing may be announced as early as Thursday, a legislator said on Wednesday. Christine Grahame, a member of the Scottish Parliament who has campaigned against the conviction, said she expected former Libyan intelligence agent Abdel Basset al-Megrahi to be freed early on compassionate grounds because he has terminal cancer. The regional administration has come under pressure from the United States to keep Megrahi in jail, while a British government minister said the wait for news was "becoming embarrassing". "I don't think it will be long coming," Grahame told BBC radio. "I suspect we might have something maybe tomorrow (Thursday) morning. We will probably go for compassionate release. It avoids a lot of difficulties." Scotland's Justice Secretary Kenny MacAskill is considering two requests from Megrahi to be released early, on compassionate grounds or under a prisoner transfer agreement (PTA) between Britain and Libya.

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