



**Testimony by Camille Wimbish, Ohio Fair Courts Alliance  
On House Bill 183  
Before the Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee  
September 23, 2021**

Chair LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony to House Bill 183, which would abolish the death penalty in the state of Ohio and modify the number of jurors that may be challenged in cases where a defendant may be sentenced to life imprisonment. This testimony is on behalf of the Ohio Fair Courts Alliance, a statewide network of organizations, community leaders and concerned citizens. We are dedicated to creating a court system that exemplifies and protects equity, fairness and justice for all.

We support this legislation to end the death penalty in Ohio as it is racially biased, unjust, inhumane, arbitrary, and erroneous. Former Ohio Supreme Court Justice Paul Pfeifer characterized the death penalty as a “death lottery...depending on where you happen to commit the crime and the attitude of the prosecutor.” This is not justice.

Public support for abolition is at an all time high. In a recent poll, nearly 60 percent of Ohioans reflected support for replacing the death penalty with life prison without the possibility of parole.<sup>1</sup> In addition to public support, this legislation is endorsed by advocacy groups, death row exonerees, victim’s family members, religious organizations, and by lawmakers on both sides of the political aisle.

Nationally, 23 states plus the District of Columbia have legislatively abolished the death penalty. We urge you to pass House Bill 183 and make Ohio the 24th.

Thank you for your consideration,

Camille Wimbish  
Ohio Fair Courts Alliance

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.acluohio.org/en/press-releases/aclu-ohio-enthusiastically-supports-bipartisan-death-penalty-repeal-bill-0>