

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney and distinguished Members of the House Finance Committee,

Good morning. My name is Cherilyn Holloway, and I am the founder of the organization Pro-Black Pro-Life. As a Black, Pro-Life Woman, I advocate to end all violent acts and injustices against my community. I hold to a consistent life ethic, and I firmly believe that we do not have the right to take the life of another human, no matter the circumstance.

Like abortion, capital punishment is used as a way to impose fear of a potential outcome, that is not based on any facts, only feelings. Both abortion and the death penalty target the Black communities in a wildly disproportionate way.

The patterns of racial discrimination that began with the racial terror lynchings of the past are still evident in the application of the modern death penalty. The same places in our country that were responsible for the most lynchings in the past are now responsible for the most executions.

The legal system disproportionately affects Black men and contributes to the extremely arbitrary application of the death penalty. A study examining the way the death penalty is applied in Hamilton County released in 2020 showed that Black men are 3-5 times more likely to receive a death sentence if their victim was white. If race didn't play a role in how someone is sentenced to death, you would expect that the racial makeup of death row would roughly correlate to the state's Black population. However, over half of Ohio's death row is Black but Black people make up only 13% of the total population in Ohio. Other factors that contribute to racial disparities in the death penalty include the race of the victim, the quality of legal representation, and the location of the trial.

Life is a precious gift that should not be deemed less worthy based on race, economic background or any other circumstance. As a proud member of the pro-life community, I am called to defend life at every

stage whether that's within a mother's womb or a person who is sitting on Ohio's death row. I thank the committee for its time and am happy to take questions.