



Senate Judiciary  
Committee

Witness Form

Today's Date 11/13/2023

Name: Richard Clark

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Organization Representing: \_\_\_\_\_

Testifying on Bill Number: SB 101

Testimony: \_\_\_\_\_ Verbal     Written    \_\_\_\_\_ Both

Testifying As:  Proponent    \_\_\_\_\_ Opponent    \_\_\_\_\_ Interested Party

Are you a Registered Lobbyist?    \_\_\_\_\_ Yes     No

Special Requests: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **BILL NUMBER SB 101 – Proponent**

### *Written Testimony Only*

November 13, 2023

Richard Clark  
2145 West 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
Cleveland, Ohio 44113

Dear Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

My name is Richard Clark and I am a resident of Cleveland. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio Senate Bill 101. I am writing to ask you to support SB 101, a bill to abolish the death penalty in Ohio.

I would like you to consider the following facts.

1. Based upon data from 1973 through 2013, (Capital Punishment in the United States, 2014 Bureau of Justice Statistics) only 16% of individuals sentenced to death are actually executed. Forty-three percent were removed from death row due to being resentenced, conviction overturned etc., and 6% died of suicide, murder, or natural causes. That left approximately 35% still on death row. During this time period, a prisoner was three times more likely to leave death row for reasons other than execution. With the recent decline in executions, this number must be higher.
2. Since 1973, the start of the modern death penalty era, 195 individuals have been released from death row due to exonerations. Eleven of these individuals were from Ohio.
3. For those executed nationally, the average elapsed time from death sentence to execution now approaches 20 years. According to the 2022 Attorney Generals report on the Death Penalty in Ohio, the average time between sentencing and the setting of an execution date in Ohio is approaching 21 years.
4. The cost of the death penalty is exorbitant. Attorney General Yost has estimated the cost of a death sentence is between one and three million dollars. With only 16% of those sentenced to death actually executed, the cost of an actual execution must be significantly higher. I would ask you to consider what else could we do with this money, including perhaps hiring more police officers or simply returning the money to the taxpayers.
5. There is a human cost to putting a human being to death. Someone must prepare the chemicals, someone must strap the individual to the gurney, and someone must start to process of the actual execution. Deliberate killing a human being is never easy. Research has suggested that many of the Wardens and Correctional Officers who participate in executions suffer psychological trauma and PTSD. (R. Johnson Death Works; 1990; R. Bohm Capital Punishment's Collateral Damage; 2013).
6. I would ask you to consider the implications of the above facts. We have an expensive procedure that takes over 20 years to come to fruition; within the time frame noted above it succeeds in its stated goal only 16% of the time; and causes mental and psychological trauma

for those who participate in the process. Could you name any other government program you would support that cost so much, fails so often, and traumatizes those who participate in it?

In conclusion, I respectfully ask you to support SB 101 and repeal the death penalty in Ohio.

Thank you for your consideration.

Richard Clark.