

House Finance Committee/ Proponent Testimony
Ohio Senate Bill 101
Written Testimony Only

Daniel Flynn
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Dear Chairman Edward, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is Daniel Flynn, and I am a resident of Cincinnati in Hamilton County, Ohio. Thank you for this opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio House Bill 259.

I am in strong support of SB 101 and believe that it is long past time to end the death penalty in Ohio. My opposition to the death penalty starts with my Catholic, Christian faith and a deep believe in the inherent dignity of each person. I know many House members share this belief.

However, I also recognize that rooting public policy in faith-based beliefs is not always good governance, and so I submit just a few of the many other reasons the death penalty must end in our state:

1. **Innocence:** We know we don't always get it right. There are 11 people who have been exonerated from death row in Ohio. The possibility of executing just one innocent person invalidates the entire practice.
2. **Victims' Families:** The death penalty does not promote healing for victims' families. It perpetuates a system of trauma in which the perpetrator is highlighted way more than victims' needs. It does nothing to address the true needs and healings that victims' families deserve.
3. **Cost:** At a time when so many Ohioans are struggling to afford housing, healthcare, and a slew of other needs, we are propping up an ineffective system that costs more than the alternative! That money should be reinvested into our communities—for basic needs I've mentioned or to give crime victims more support.
4. **Racial and Economic Bias:** Rich people do not receive the death penalty; only poor people do. And while death rows often are disproportionately filled with non-white offenders, the even more egregious bias racially is for *victims*. We are way more likely to give the death penalty to someone who kills a white person than a non-white person. These biases create an unfair and arbitrary system.
5. **Geographic Lottery:** If I commit a horrific crime in Highland County, I am not going to receive the death penalty; that County doesn't have the resources to pursue it. But if I commit it in Hamilton County, I could receive the death penalty (as many have!). The absurdity of this geographic lottery further perpetuates an unfair and arbitrary system.

Again, these are just a few of the reason that Ohio does not need the death penalty. It does not deter crime, and we can keep our citizens safe without it!

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote yes on this critically important bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

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