



Senate Judiciary Committee

Senate Bill 101

In Person Testimony Only

Rev. Dr. Amariah McIntosh

14 November 2023

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

My name is Rev. Dr. Amariah H. McIntosh and I am a resident of Bowling Green. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio Senate Bill 101.

I am the Associate Director of the Ohio Council of Churches and a church pastor in Akron. For as long as I can remember, I have not seen the justice in state sponsored executions. As one who has experienced the pain as a family member of someone whose life was taken senselessly, I believe that there are more humane ways to affect justice in these cases. The late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once declared that "an eye for an eye only results in two blind people."

The death penalty is final so that if it is discovered that an error has been made in its application, there is no way to correct the error. I recall the case of the young man in South Carolina who was executed at the age of 12 for a crime he didn't commit, and the state finally exonerated him seventy years after his execution, this is not justice or fairness.

Since 1973, more than 195 death row inmates have been exonerated of all charges and released. Ohio is home to 11 death row exonerees who collectively spent 216 years incarcerated for crimes they did not commit. For every five people the state of Ohio has executed, one has been found innocent. This kind of mistake is far too frequent when human lives are at stake.

In addition, the cost to try, house, and execute a person sentenced to death runs in the hundreds of millions of dollars, money that can be better spent on human needs such as housing, health care, nutrition, and education.

I join my voice with others around the state of Ohio that are calling for passage of SB101 so that Ohio may join the other states that have abolished the death penalty. Thanks again for the opportunity to testify.

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Ohio Council of Churches



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