

Senate Judiciary Committee
Senate Bill 101
Written Testimony Only

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

My name is Robbie Seaton-Todd and I am a resident of Mentor. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio Senate Bill 101.

My training is as a physicist and I have worked with many government and university teams on nuclear physics research. I know that science is only possible in a society that is safe and secure. And I am glad that you all have chosen to become public servants and do the very difficult work of writing laws that uphold safety and promote justice.

It makes sense if some of you think that by using the death penalty, we can “punish the most heinous offenders” and this will make us safer or happier after a tragic crime. However, using execution as a punitive or protective measure has been proven to be ineffective (**states with the death penalty actually see higher murder rates than states without it . . . and no FBI study has ever been able to identify the death penalty as an effective deterrent to crime . . . and similar states like Michigan abolished the death penalty before the Civil War and yet don’t see worse rates of victim satisfaction or worse rates of crime**).

Despite these facts, Ohio prosecutors are overzealous in seeking death sentences and constantly spend millions of dollars on a case trying to get a jury to give the death penalty. However, over 90% of the time, the jury gives a life-without-parole sentence instead of death, so all that money on special capital case witnesses is wasted “for nothing.”

Worse, our system of death sentences has seen multiple innocent people not just wrongfully convicted, but spend decades on death row. Can we really accept a rate of error in a system so final? Do we deserve to kill anyone, innocent or guilty, when we’ve sentenced 1 innocent person to death for every 5 people we’ve executed?

In a society that values safety and justice, why should we continue spending resources on a government system that fails in its stated goal over 90% of the time, endangers innocent life, has been shown to be unnecessary, and wastes tax dollars?

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

Robbie Seaton-Todd