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Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, and Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, I write today in opposition to Senate Bill 101. As our state has repeatedly moved to embrace additional rights and protections for victims of crime, removing our strongest penalty for the most violent offenders undermines this important work.

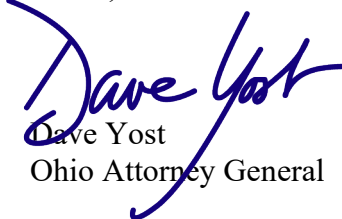
Every year the Attorney General's office issues the Capital Crimes Report which provides a detailed explanation of the crimes committed by offenders sentenced to death. As of April 1, 2024, Ohio has 119 people on Death Row. I have provided each of you with a copy of last year's report and ask that you read more about the horrendous crimes these individuals have committed. Ask yourself if it is good public policy to hold the lives of these offenders inviolate, regardless of the nature of their offenses or the number of victims they've killed.

Instead, I continue to urge the legislature to exercise your authority to do something to fix the state's broken capital punishment system. Earlier this year, I testified in the House in support of House Bill 392 which would provide for an alternative method of execution. That bill also extends confidentiality provisions to pharmaceutical companies who provide the compounds Ohio currently uses in its execution protocol. To the extent there continues to be concern about our current execution method, this bill provides an alternative option and additional protections related to lethal injection.

While I continue to believe that Ohio should fix its current system, I must begrudgingly admit that the status quo—where Ohio sentences offenders to death and fails to carry out the sentence—represents an egregious miscarriage of justice. The friends and loved ones of the victims deserve closure. When a jury convicts an offender and that offender is sentenced to death, that sentence should ultimately be carried out once appeals are exhausted. If there is no intent by the state to carry out these sentences, we must address those concerns so that Ohio law is enforced.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share my view on this important topic. I urge the legislature to focus its attention on ensuring current Ohio law is enforced.

Yours,



Dave Yost  
Ohio Attorney General