

Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee
Proponent Testimony
House Bill 183

Written Testimony Only of:
David Sablosky
September 18, 2021

Dear Chairman LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee:

My name is David Sablosky and I am a resident of Fairfield Township in Butler County, Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony for House Bill 183.

It is axiomatic that in a free society it is a mistake to grant a government the legal ability to execute its citizens. The tragic state of the administration of the death penalty in Ohio supports this maxim:

- Since the death penalty has been reinstated in 1981, for every five people Ohio has executed one has been exonerated. Consider this data point, of the 56 prisoners Ohio has "successfully" executed, there have been eleven sentences of death by Ohio that were later exonerated!
- Meanwhile, we have a system so convoluted that only one of every six death penalty convictions have ever been carried out. Surely Ohio has no other program that has been ran with such grizzly inefficiency.
- To attain this grizzly inefficiency, we spend as much as \$16 million per case.
- Ohio's death penalty program has a racial bias:
 - While people of color make up less than 15% of Ohio's population, they make up 56% of Ohio's death row, 33% of those executed, and 72% of those exonerated.
 - When Ohio executions have taken place, 75% of the time the crime committed has involved a white victim
- Ohio's death penalty program is inequitably administrated depending upon where the crime is committed. Almost half (45%) of Ohio's executions have been from just three of the state's 88 counties – specifically, Hamilton, Cuyahoga, and Summit counties. However, these counties only make up approximately one fourth of Ohio's total population. Whether someone is sentenced to death has less to do with the crime they committed and more to do with the victim and the location of that crime.
- Ohio's Attorney General Dave Yost even admits in the 2020 Capital Crimes Report that "the report draws attention to the fact that the system has grown increasingly time-consuming, costly and lethargic."

Bob Taft, Lee Fisher and Jim Petro, a former Ohio governor and two former Ohio Attorney Generals agree that the death penalty in Ohio is a "a broken and incredibly costly system that fails to protect or aid us in any way."

Is it any surprise this happens when legislators give the government the legal right to execute its citizens?

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



David Sablosky