

House Criminal Justice Committee

Proponent Testimony

Ohio House Bill 183

Written Testimony Only

Francesco Todaro

June 23, 2021

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

My name is Francesco Todaro and I am a resident of Tuscany (Italy), where the death penalty was repealed, for the first time ever in the world, on November 30th 1786. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio House Bill 183.

A large movement of faith and civil testimonials, from different countries and traditions, have been asking to stop the death penalty worldwide, spreading the actual mainstream awareness: the death penalty is never an appropriate mean of justice enforcement, but it must be abolished always and everywhere. This has led, in the most recent years, most countries in the world to abolish the death penalty and dramatically decrease the number of executions.

My personal experience added much to such awareness: from long lasting pen pal relationships with some death row incarcerated persons, in Ohio and other States, from sharing the human necessity of justice together with compassion and deepest change, plenty of reasons come to say why the death penalty has to be abolished:

Because it bends down the State and the society to the level of the killer

Because no statistic proves that capital punishment is a deterrent to major crimes

Because too many times it affects innocent people who cannot defend themselves

Because there is no justice system in the world so perfect that cannot be mistaken

Because it affects minorities, racial, social, ethnic and religious, in an uneven way

Because capital punishment does not make the world a better place, but it adds death to death

Because it creates orphans and widows and pain amongst the relatives of the one being executed

Because it gives the false hope to the victim's relatives that, through the revenge on the presumed perpetrator, there will be the healing of pain and hate. This is never true

Because it legitimates at the highest level, that of the State, a culture of death and not of life

Because it expresses the failure of a society that discards seeing in each person, even in the guilty one, a human being

Because there is premeditation and use of science in killing, which is comparable to the craziest murderer

Because in many countries in the world, it affects the weakest: mental handicapped and poorest defendants

Because there is always an alternative method to guarantee security for all

Because it makes us all co-responsible for a death, which is given also on our behalf

Because in democratic regimes, it is more expensive than imprisonment. It absorbs resources that could be useful for humanizing judicial system and prisons

Because life is sacred

Because never, for no reason, can we become like the worse murderer

Because there is a torture that goes together with the sentence, which cannot be eliminated: it means dying ten, hundred, thousand times even before being executed

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