

House Finance Committee/ Proponent Testimony

Ohio House Bill 259

Written Testimony Only

Anne Feczko

Oct 9, 2023

Dear Chairman Edward, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is Anne Feczko and I am a resident of Cincinnati, Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio House Bill 259.

As a lifelong Catholic, I am compelled to promote the dignity of each human person. The Catholic Catechism describes the death penalty as "inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person." My belief in this inherent dignity led me to a career in nursing, particularly among those experiencing homelessness and incarceration, where I have witnessed over and over the dramatic transformation people can undergo when provided adequate psychosocial and spiritual supports. Pro-life politicians must recognize the absurdity of spending so much time and energy to protect unborn life while simultaneously condoning executions.

As a Board Member for Journey of Hope...From Violence to Healing, I have come to know the stories of many murder victim family members who underwent transformations of their own when faced with a loved one's devastating murder. Our members partner with death row families and exonerees to explain why the death penalty does *not* bring them healing and in fact *further traumatizes* these families. I call on you to listen carefully to these essential voices which have often been ignored or even antagonized by representatives of the state.

As a proud Ohioan, I am working and praying to move House Bill 259 forward this year. It is past time for Ohio to join the 24 other states in our country who have abolished the death penalty as an expensive, ineffective, dangerous, and racially biased practice.