

Senate Judiciary Committee
Senate Bill 101
Written Testimony Only

Dr. Steve Bein

November 14, 2023

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

My name is Steve Bein and I am a concerned resident of Dayton. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio Senate Bill 101.

The argument against the death penalty ought to be self-evident to everyone by now. The facts are clear and indisputable:

1. **Executing a prisoner is more expensive than keeping the same prisoner behind bars for life.** Death penalty trials alone cost Ohio taxpayers at least \$128 million, perhaps as much as \$384 million. This is to say nothing of the inordinate expense of death row itself, the waste of court, police, and prison resources, and countless other expenses.
2. **The death penalty is the one mistake it is impossible to correct.** For every five people the state of Ohio has executed, one has been found innocent. If one in six parking tickets went on the wrong car, citizens would be outraged—and rightly so. If we wouldn't tolerate that injustice for a parking ticket, we shouldn't tolerate it when it comes to human life.
3. **Ohio's death penalty has never been applied justly.** While people of color constitute less than 15% of Ohio's general population, they are 39% of the prison population, 56% of the death row population, and a shocking 72% of exonerated death row prisoners. When killers are sentenced to death, 75% of the time the victim is white. Simply put, the death penalty establishes that in Ohio, white lives matter more than everyone else's.

In short, it is a statistical certainty that the state of Ohio has taken the lives of innocent people. The legal term for that is murder. So long as the death penalty remains legal here, Ohio is certain to murder again. There is no error-free way to execute people. The only solution is to join the 24 US states that have already saved money, defended their citizens, and joined the rest of the civilized world in abolishing capital punishment.

Please vote yes on this critically important bill. End the death penalty in Ohio. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Steve Bein