

Senate Judiciary Committee
Senate Bill 101
Proponent Testimony
Written Testimony Only

John C Calhoun

11/12/2023

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

My name is John and I am a resident of Cincinnati, Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio Senate Bill 101.

I support SB 101 and abolishing Ohio's death penalty for many reasons. First, I believe the use of the death penalty has been, and continues to be, racist. The racial disparities are revealed when we see that people of color make up 56% of Ohio's death row, while only making up less than 15% of Ohio's population. And, when Ohio executions have taken place, 75% of the time the crime committed has involved a white victim.

The death penalty is also unjust because of the financial cost. It is more likely to persecute the poor as they are unlikely able to afford adequate legal representation. And at the same time, death penalty trials are costing Ohio taxpayers as much as \$128 million to \$384 million.

And finally, I believe the death penalty is immoral, violent, disregards the dignity of all peoples, and prevents us from attaining reconciliation and restoring justice. Since 1973, more than 195 death row inmates have been exonerated of all charges and released. And one out of 5 people executed by the state of Ohio have been found innocent. We cannot morally continue this practice and risk innocent lives.

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