

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Senate Bill 101  
Written Testimony Only

Mackenzie Doyle

11/10/23

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

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

For me, as a Catholic, I am called to uphold the dignity of all life, from womb to tomb and everything in-between. Keeping the death penalty does not allow for mercy or redemption. Nor do I think that the state should be in charge of taking another's life no matter what the person has possibly committed. In my current position as the Justice Promoter for the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, I am working for an organization that has also taken abolition of the death penalty seriously since October 2000. As a congregation, the Sisters of Charity have stated that they "believe that the death penalty should be abolished in the United States in law and in practice."<sup>1</sup> Following in their legacy, I am urging you all to consider abolishing the unjust system of the death penalty in Ohio.

I am concerned with keeping a system that is all too often wrong or is set up to exploit those of different skin colors or socioeconomic status. In Ohio, the numbers are startling. 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. Since 1973, more than 195 death row inmates have been exonerated of all charges and released. Ohio is home to 11 death row exonerees who collectively spent 216 years incarcerated for crimes they did not commit. For every five people the state of Ohio has executed, one has been found innocent. That urges us to reflect on how many innocent people we have put to death throughout our history as a state.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.srcharitycinti.org/ministries/scj-ministries/jpic/priority-issues/death-penalty/>

Lastly, I do not believe that this punishment actually deters crime nor helps families, communities, and survivors heal in the long run. Moreover, the death penalty is often sought without input from the survivors. There is no space in our current legal system for repairing or restoring broken relationships in the communities where the crime occurred. Additionally, the National Research Council of the National Academies concluded that studies claiming the death penalty has a deterrent effect are fundamentally flawed.<sup>2</sup> Studies have shown that murder rates, including murders of police officers, are consistently higher in states that have the death penalty, while states that abolished the death penalty have the lowest rates of police officers killed in the line of duty.<sup>3</sup>

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

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<sup>2</sup> National Research Council of the National Academies, Deterrence and the Death Penalty 2 (Daniel S. Nagin & John V. Pepper eds., 2012).

<sup>3</sup> <https://deathpenaltyinfo.org/policy-issues/deterrence/capital-punishment-and-police-safety>