

Senate Judiciary Committee
Senate Bill 101
Proponent
Written Testimony Only
Adeline Hatfield
November 14, 2023

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

My name is Adeline. I am a resident of Mogadore in Portage County and I am a fourth-year student Miami University of Ohio where I am pursuing degrees in Political Science & Education. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio Senate Bill 101.

The death penalty is fundamentally flawed. This punishment is incompatible with justice, as it risks the execution of innocent individuals and disproportionately affects marginalized communities. The potential for wrongful convictions and the irreversible nature of the death penalty make it a flawed option. Our criminal justice system, like any human institution, is prone to error, and we cannot ignore the possibility of condemning an innocent person to death. Ending the death penalty is an essential step in reducing the risk of such grave miscarriages of justice.

Furthermore, the death penalty perpetuates a cycle of violence and vengeance that contradicts the values of mercy and reconciliation that were central to my lifelong Catholic education. It fails to address the root causes of crime and does not provide true healing for victims or their families. Instead, it fosters an atmosphere of retaliation and retribution, hindering the potential for genuine rehabilitation and forgiveness.

The time for abolition is now. Recent polling data by the Tarrance Group shows that the majority of Ohioans favor an alternative to the death penalty such as life without parole. We have a governor that supports abolition which we cannot guarantee forever. Ohio can and should be the next state that decides to stand against the death penalty.

In conclusion, ending the death penalty is an essential step towards a more peaceful and just world. We can work towards a society that upholds the dignity of every human being, seeks genuine justice, and promotes reconciliation and forgiveness. It is time for us to push forward Senate Bill 101 and end the death penalty in Ohio.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.