

Senate Judiciary Committee
Senate Bill 101
Written Testimony Only

Rev. Dr. Sandy Seaton-Todd
11-13-2023

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

My name is Rev. Dr. Sandy Seaton-Todd and I am a resident of Mentor. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio Senate Bill 101.

Before entering ministry, I worked as a lawyer for Baker Hostetler in Cleveland. After seminary, I began leading churches throughout Northeast Ohio. I have spent my life in and around many Ohio communities. I currently serve a several hundred person congregation in Pepper Pike. It is evident how few people want our state to continue spending resources on the death penalty. So many of us support this bill and want to repeal the death penalty.

I believe in a morally and fiscally responsible state. And it is clear that this system of death sentences has been unfair for decades despite attempts to reform it . . . with multiple innocent people having spent 20-30+ years on death row (and with the U.S. Supreme Court identifying major racial bias in how the system is applied).

It is also clear that this system wastes public dollars that could be used to help victims and co-victims after crimes have happened or to better prevent crimes in the first place.

I am against the death penalty because it wastes our taxpayer money, there is too high of an error rate, it does not deter crime, and I don't believe we deserve to say who lives and who dies. I am against killing people even if they are guilty. But since so many people are wrongfully convicted, it is unconscionable that we have a death penalty. Please vote this bill forward and abolish it.

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

Rev. Dr. Sandy Seaton-Todd