

Senate Judiciary Committee
Senate Bill 101
Written Testimony Only
St. Paschal Baylon Social Action Commission
November 15, 2023

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

We are the St. Paschal Baylon Social Action Commission of Highland Heights Ohio. We are residents of Highland Heights, South Euclid, Richmond Heights, University Heights, Pepper Pike, and Lyndhurst. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio Senate Bill 101.

As member of a faith community we believe that the death penalty should be abolished. Pope Francis has stated: "Today we state clearly that 'the death penalty is inadmissible' and the Church is firmly committed to calling for its abolition worldwide." We note with joy that all of the European Union has abolished the death penalty and more than 2/3 of all countries have done the same. We trust that Ohio will do the same. It is our firm belief that the death penalty is incompatible with human dignity due to the fact that it is inhumane and degrading. Over the centuries it has not proven an effective deterrent. More importantly it opens the door to irreversible and fatal errors. In addition the death penalty can easily operate out of fear and resentment which leads to viewing punishment in a vindictive and even cruel way, rather than as part of a process of healing and reintegration into society. And finally we are aware that while less than 15% of Ohio's population are people of color, they make up 56% of Ohio's death row. This significant racial disparity cries out for justice.

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