

Dear Governor-and Members of the Kansas Legislature,

We the undersigned faith leaders call for an end to the death penalty in Kansas.

Because of our faith, we deeply desire justice for all people. We firmly believe that the needs of family members of murder victims must be addressed in the aftermath of murder, and that those who commit crimes should be held accountable in ways that are just and effective. We therefore advocate for policies that show compassion for the families and loved ones of murder victims while holding those who commit crimes appropriately accountable. There is growing evidence that the death penalty accomplishes neither of these aims.

There is much evidence to suggest that the existence of the death penalty harms victim families. Imposing the death penalty often prolongs the suffering and delays the healing of the victim's family members as they are forced to relive the trauma again and again while they endure the appeals process.

There is also growing evidence to suggest that the use of the death penalty is neither just nor effective. We now know that the death penalty in this country has resulted in the execution of those who were innocent. In addition, evidence shows that the death penalty is often unfairly applied due to factors such as race or social class of the victim or geographic location. Furthermore, many studies suggest that the death penalty is not an effective deterrent; it does not prevent murders.

In addition, we believe that the death penalty is not the highest and best use of the state's limited financial resources. We advocate rather that state funds be used to support programs that prevent crime, improve education, and provide services to the families of murder victims. We should use our resources to improve life, not end it.

Finally, we believe all human life is sacred and created by God, and, therefore, we must see all human life as significant and valuable. As people of faith we believe in and affirm people's capacity for change. We believe that no individual is beyond redemption and that our government should not condone policies that deny the prospect of redemption.

We urge you to work with your colleagues to repeal the death penalty in Kansas.

Sincerely,

Name: _____

Faith Community: _____

Title, Role, or Position: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return your signed letter to KCADP at PO Box 2065, Topeka, KS 66601 or info@ksabolition.org