

Death Penalty

Since 1977, one year after the US Supreme Court reaffirmed the constitutionality of the death penalty, more than 1,480 people have been executed, primarily by means of lethal injection. Most death penalty cases involve the execution of murderers although capital punishment can also be applied for treason, espionage, and other crimes.

Proponents of the death penalty say it is an important tool for preserving law and order, deters crime, and costs less than life imprisonment. They argue that retribution or “an eye for an eye” honors the victim, helps console grieving families, and ensures that the perpetrators of heinous crimes never have an opportunity to cause future tragedy.

Opponents of capital punishment say it has no deterrent effect on crime, wrongly gives governments the power to take human life, and perpetuates social injustices by disproportionately targeting people of color (racist) and people who cannot afford good attorneys (classist). They say lifetime jail sentences are a more severe and less expensive punishment than death.

Although I am a staunch supporter of tougher penalties for convicted criminals, I do not believe the ultimate penalty of death should be a sentence invoked by anyone except our Creator for any case or any reason.

The President (in federal criminal cases), and the Governor (in state convictions), has the power to pardon a person convicted of a crime, commute the sentence (shorten it, often to time already served) or reduce it from death to another lesser sentence. There are many reasons for exercising this power, including real doubts about the guilt of the party, apparent excessive sentence, humanitarian reasons such as illness of an aged inmate, and to clear the record of someone who has demonstrated rehabilitation or public service.

I recommend granting clemency to all individuals currently on death row and reduce their sentence to life in prison. Furthermore, I would strongly urge the members of Congress to formally abolish the death penalty. In the meantime, I recommend considering all other possible actions including directing the Department of Justice to stop seeking the death penalty and withdrawing notices of intent to seek the death penalty in ongoing cases.

America! What a great place to live.

Thanks, Semper Fi, and Stay Safe !

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