

An unacceptable probability of executing innocent people

- ♦ One person has been exonerated for every ten who've been executed.
- ♦ Many others have been executed while serious doubts have been raised regarding their verdict.
- ♦ DNA is only available in 10% of criminal cases. Even then, it's only as good as the people running the tests. Despite the best intentions, human beings aren't perfect. We simply can't be right 100% of the time.

A wasteful and expensive government program

- ♦ Studies have show that the death penalty is up to *20 times more* expensive than a system of life without the possibility of parole. Yet shortcuts and cost-cutting could mean an irreversible mistake.
- ♦ The State of California has spent over 4 billion dollars to maintain the death penalty program.
- ♦ Jasper County, Texas was forced to raise property taxes by 7% to pay for one death penalty trial.

A failed policy for victims' families

- ♦ The death penalty prolongs pain for victims' families, dragging them through an agonizing, decades-long process as courts repeat trials and hearings trying to get it right. Most cases result in a life sentence in the end anyway – but only after the family has suffered years of uncertainty.
- ♦ The death penalty showers resources and attention on a few cherry-picked cases, telling families that some lives are more important than others.

Arbitrarily and unfairly administered by the government

- ♦ The death penalty is a lottery of geography. Most U.S. counties don't use it at all, and many states have a large percentage of death sentences originate from just one or two counties.
- ♦ People on death row have had lawyers who were drunk, asleep, later disbarred, or completely inexperienced. That's not the fair day in court our justice system is built on.
- ♦ People who do not support the death penalty are excluded from serving on capital juries. That means even people who oppose it for religious or pro-life reasons may not participate in this important civic duty.

It doesn't make the public safer

- ♦ In the name of helping law enforcement, the death penalty concentrates enormous state resources on chasing a small handful of executions while thousands of cases go unsolved.
- ♦ No credible study has found any evidence that the death penalty deters violent crime. Police chiefs know this from experience: they rank the death penalty last among effective ways to reduce crime.

Conservatives Concerned about the Death Penalty is a national network of conservatives questioning the alignment of capital punishment with conservative principles.

We came together to shatter the myth that conservatives blindly support the death penalty, as well as to create a forum to network and to speak collectively about the need to re-examine capital punishment from a conservative perspective.

Conservatives across the board are increasingly concerned that the death penalty is a broken system.

What Conservatives Are Saying

“ Conservatives should question how the death penalty actually works in order to stay true to small government, reduction in wasteful spending, and respect for human life.”

– Jay Sekulow, Chief Counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice

“ Since we believe each person has a soul, and is capable of achieving salvation, life in prison is now an alternative to the death penalty.”

– Brent Bozell III, Founder and President, Media Research Center

“ Conservatives have every reason to believe the death penalty system is no different from any politicized, costly, inefficient, bureaucratic, government-run operation, which we conservatives know are rife with injustice. But here the end result is the end of someone’s life. In other words, it’s a government system that kills people.”

– Richard Viguerie

See many more quotes from conservative leaders at conservativesconcerned.org