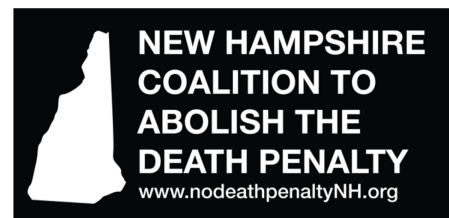


NH Law Enforcement & Corrections Officers Respond



Some members of law enforcement say the death penalty deters crime and that the death penalty is warranted for the killing of police officers. Is a vote for repeal a vote against public safety? A vote against the well-being and security of our police?

I strongly believe that the death penalty does not deter crime. A vote to repeal would enhance public safety and the security of our police officers. The millions of dollars saved could help fix the broken mental health system in NH. The money saved could be used to fund prevention and treatment centers which are almost non-existent in our state. Mental health and substance abuse issues are the major problems facing the police and the citizens they protect so well. Please remember: Desperate people do desperate things!

–Richard O'Leary, Retired Deputy Chief, Manchester NH Police Dept (33 years of service)

The answer is “No” on both counts. The death penalty does not deter crime and we need look no further than the state’s recent history for guidance. In 2006, Manchester Police Officer Michael Briggs was shot and killed in the line of duty. A much publicized affair was made that the death penalty would be sought for Officer Brigg’s killer, Michael Addison. Yet, less than seven months later, Franconia Police Cpl. Bruce McKay was shot and killed. And just five years later, with a convicted capital murderer sitting on death row, Greenland Police Chief Michael Maloney was shot and killed. Deterrence presumes careful forethought of the consequences before one commits a crime. In my experience, criminals almost never consider consequences. That’s why they are criminals. They don’t think like you and me. A vote to repeal is really a vote FOR public safety and the well-being and security of our police. Repeal would free up the exorbitant amounts of money being spent on one case for better safety equipment and training for police. It would free up money to provide additional and better services for those whom might otherwise be following the path to a life of crime.

–Raymond T. Dodge, Retired Police Chief, Marlborough, NH (25 years of service)

It is by my cherished Catholic faith to which I am deeply committed and my conscience which is a product of this faith, that I staunchly oppose the death penalty and seek its repeal. The appropriate response to heinous crimes is stricter sentences and truth in sentencing. No one wins and nothing is gained by taking yet another life! None of this should be construed as a lack of respect and sensitivity for victims and victims' families, nor the law enforcement community in which I proudly serve.

–Fintan P. Moore Jr., 15-year veteran, Keene Police Department

Like the general public, members of law enforcement are not of one mind about the death penalty. Certainly, the killing of a police officer is a terrible crime, however, there is no proof that the existence of the death penalty serves as a viable deterrent to such an act. The existing studies to date, in fact, indicate to the contrary that capital punishment is not a deterrent to violent crime. Consequently, a vote to repeal the death penalty is in no way a vote against either public safety or the safety and well-being of those in law enforcement. Rather, it is a vote to move away from the vengeance mentality of trying to deter violence with violence, to seeking more effective and morally justifiable means.

–The Rev, Dr. Cynthia T. Morse, OEF, former Parole Officer and Correctional Administrator in the Connecticut Department of Correction

A vote to repeal the death penalty will ensure that innocent persons will not be executed and is a means of ensuring the safety of those members of the public who are wrongly convicted of murder. Studies clearly show that the vast majority violent offenders do not consider potential punishment prior to engaging in violent behavior whether such behavior is directed at acquaintances, strangers or police. Any persons, civilian or police, who have ever "lost their temper" can attest to the fact that they did not consider the harm they might do to others as a result of their anger. Therefore I do not believe that the repeal of the death penalty has any bearing on the well-being or security of police officers or anyone else.

–F.R., Former Nashua Police Officer (14 years of service)

I do not believe that the death penalty deters crime in any way. Repealing the death is not a vote against public safety nor the well-being or security of police officers. Individuals who kill have no conscience or moral regards towards the lives of others and are only consumed with self-survival regardless of the cost to others.

–K.C., Retired Police Officer from South Carolina (20 years of service), now living in NH