

Statement by Andrea LeBlanc

May 17, 2018

Dear Governor Sununu,

During our 30 years together, my husband, Robert G. LeBlanc, and I shared the absolute conviction that the death penalty was a disgrace and should be abolished universally. A few of the many reasons we believed this to be true ...

- Our judicial system is not infallible and people are sometimes found guilty of and condemned for crimes they did not commit.
- Justice is not meted out to all members of society evenhandedly or impartially.
- Execution is not reversible.
- Death precludes any chance for reconciliation, rehabilitation, or any meaningful restitution.
- While perpetrators of crimes must be prevented from doing further harm, killing them does not undo any injury or heal any harm.
- Retribution is not the same thing as justice ... and execution has everything to do with retribution rather than justice.
- The United States finds itself alone among western countries in continuing to maintain the death penalty.
- The enormous amount of money expended on executions could and should be spent on restorative justice and addressing the causes of violent crime.



On Sept. 11, 2001 my husband was murdered in the second plane to hit the WTC.

I was asked, as a victim's family member, to testify for the defense in Zaccharia Moussaoui's trial. I thought long and hard about what I believed and why I would do this. I did testify, in part, because my convictions regarding the death penalty had not changed, but also because there are very few things I know to be absolutely true. One of them is that violence *always* begets violence. There are many forms of violence. The acts of the terrorists on 9-11 were horrendous acts of violence. State-sponsored killing is an act of violence as well.

It is believed by many that victims of violence not only deserve, but *need* revenge in order to heal and find 'closure'. I honestly don't even know what closure means. Pain and loss of this magnitude will not be removed or remedied through vengeance or by acts of retaliation.

Another of the very few things I know to be absolutely true is that we have choices at every moment and every choice has consequences. We can live with and nurture our anger and

hatred or our despair, choosing to remain victims to our pain and sorrow. We can give it the power to control our lives. We can choose to remain victims. Or we can refuse.

I refuse to let my life be defined by anger, hatred or despair.

I refuse to seek retribution and vengeance rather than justice.

I refuse to abandon all compassion for even those who commit terrible acts of violence.

I refuse to be guilty of the same barbaric acts committed against me and my family.

I refuse to give my permission to the government that represents me to kill in my name.

I urge you to sign Senate Bill 593 and abolish the death penalty in New Hampshire.

In all sincerity,

Andrea N LeBlanc
aldvm@comcast.net
603-868-5200