

DEATH PENALTY REPEAL IN OHIO: WHY CONSERVATIVES ARE LEADING THE CHARGE

Ohio Conservatives Concerned About the Death Penalty (CCATDP-OH) is a network of political and social conservative Ohioans who question the alignment of capital punishment with conservative principles and values. Launched on February 18, 2020 in collaboration with Ohioans to Stop Executions (OTSE), CCATDP-Ohio is part of the national Conservatives Concerned About the Death Penalty network, which is active in 15 states.

WHY WE ARE CONCERNED

The death penalty is increasingly viewed as out of alignment with many core conservative principles such as limited government, fiscal responsibility, and protecting innocent life.

- Some believe that a limited government and the death penalty don't go together, especially when comparing the high costs of capital punishment to life without possibility of release. The death penalty costs millions more dollars than a system of life without parole – before a single appeal is even filed. And shortcuts could mean an irreversible mistake.
- Some don't trust the state to get it right. We already know that many innocent people have been sentenced to death, and for others it may already be too late.
- Some are disturbed that the death penalty takes attention away from the needs of family members of murder victims, prolongs their pain, or wonder why we're investing so much in a system that doesn't keep us any safer than the alternatives.
- Some believe that the death penalty contradicts our values about protecting life and targets the most vulnerable among us.

SINCE 1976, OHIO HAS **EXECUTED 56**
INDIVIDUALS AND HAS SEEN
11 DEATH ROW EXONERATIONS.



**THIS MEANS FOR EVERY 5 EXECUTIONS
IN OHIO, ONE PERSON WAS EXONERATED.**

There has been a surge in conservative support for ending the death penalty, and Ohio is a big part of this momentum:

- Over the last ten years there has been a six fold increase in the number of Republicans sponsoring death penalty repeal bills.
- In 2019, 11 states had Republican-sponsored repeal legislation. More than fifty Republican lawmakers signed onto these bills.
- More than 67% of the Republicans sponsoring death penalty repeal bills did so in conservative states, including Wyoming, Montana, and Kentucky.
- In 2019, 250 prominent conservatives signed a national statement of support for ending the death penalty. This includes thirty five conservative leaders from Ohio - and that number is growing.
- Evangelicals are also increasingly rejecting the death penalty. Many Evangelical leaders have publicly opposed executions in a number of capital cases and the National Association of Evangelicals has revised their previously pro-death penalty position to one that gives space for opposition to the death penalty and acknowledges its flaws.

Ohio
Conservatives
Concerned | About the
Death Penalty

A Project of OTSE

PROMINENT OHIO CONSERVATIVE VOICES:



"I've heard all the justifications — deterrence, support for victims, cost savings. And I know now they are all wrong, and those misguided arguments act as a smoke screen for the profound flaws that mark capital punishment."

JIM PETRO
FORMER OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

"We believe that the sanctity of life should be protected more than anything else and when you give the government the power over life, you're giving them the ultimate power, and we've seen throughout history in the US and the world where giving the government that much power can have devastating effects."

REP. LAURA LANESE
R-GROVE CITY



"It is my Christian faith that has led me to oppose the death penalty. My belief is that life begins at conception and should only end at natural death,"

REP. CRAIG RIEDEL
R-DEFIANCE

"I felt that unless there really was a mistake in law or evidence that it should proceed pursuant to law. But having gone through that experience and having examined the death penalty after being out of office, I'm developing growing reservations about it."

BOB TAFT
FORMER OHIO GOVERNOR



"Even the chance of someone being put to death who could be innocent, I believe, for pro-life people across the country, is enough to oppose the death penalty."

REP. NIRAJ ANTANI
R-MIAMISBURG