

## **OHIO VOICES**

"From my historical perspective I think 20 years after [enacting] a statute as important to the structure of the criminal justice system as the death penalty is would be an appropriate time to review it to determine that we have complete confidence in the trends of its applications to the citizens of this state."

**~ Justice Paul Pfeifer (R), Ohio Supreme Court and author of Ohio's death penalty  
Gongwer News Service, June 5, 2003**

"There is a pretty wide disparity with how the death penalty is administered in the state and I think we need to take a look at whether we're doing it the best possible way or whether there are better ways."

**~ Ohio Attorney General Mark Dann, Dayton Daily News, January 15, 2007**

"It's not about crime prevention or crime deterrence or saving money. [With executions] we're creating a lot of other residual victims."

**~ Rex Zent, former warden, Madison Correctional Institution and North Central Correctional  
Institution at Marion**

"I recently came across an arresting headline: 'The death penalty's days are numbered.' And, I believe it. Why? It's a game of chance with the only certain result more killing... The parade of cases of death row 'innocents' continues unabated... The welter of confusion in these cases is not unusual in death cases. No wonder the Supreme Court observed 30 years ago, 'it is beyond human capacity to accomplish justice in death penalty cases.'"

**~ Thomas Luken, former prosecutor, Mayor of Cincinnati, and Member of Congress  
Cincinnati Post, February 16, 2001**

"For most of my political life I held strongly conservative views. I was pro-life and pro-death penalty. I understand more clearly today that alternatives exist – such as life imprisonment without the possibility of parole – which protect society, and which respect the sanctity of life."

**~ Paul C. Mifsud, Chief of Staff to former Ohio Governor George V. Voinovich**

"I would not oppose the abolition of the death penalty statute. The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world with the death penalty — on the books in 38 states."

**~ Reggie Wilkinson, former Department of Corrections Director  
Dayton Daily News, January 15, 2007**

"I believe that the time has come to reexamine whether we, as a society, should administer the death penalty to a person with a serious mental illness."

**~ Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton, Ohio Supreme Court  
State v. Ketterer, 2006-Ohio-5283**

“...the dysfunctional patchwork of stays and executions going on in this country further undermines the various states’ effectiveness and ability to properly carry out death sentences. We are currently operating under a system wherein condemned inmates are bringing nearly identical challenges to the lethal injection procedure. In some instances stays are granted, while in others they are not and the defendants are executed, with no principled distinction to justify such a result.”

**~ Former Chief Judge Boyce Martin, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit  
Alley v. Little, No. 06-5650 (6th Cir. May 16, 2006)**

“It’s about Emily. It’s about the people of Ohio. When we execute someone, in some subtle ways, we may harm ourselves... [If McKnight was serving life without parole] we would have less reason to think about him.”

**~ Mr. and Mrs. Murray (parents of murder victim Emily Murray) requesting that the death sentence of their daughter’s killer be commuted to life without parole**

“I think it’s incumbent upon me or any other governor to exercise extreme care in this matter. ...there have been documented cases, I think at this point even scores, certainly numerous people released after extended periods of stay on death row as a result of new information, primarily related to DNA testing. No system is totally perfect in its application.”

**~ Ohio Governor Ted Strickland, Dayton Daily News, January 15, 2007**

“Our criminal justice system doesn’t always mete out justice and fairness in neat little packages – sometimes it’s a little rough. It’s not something you can compute with calculus or with any kind of certainty as to who belongs and who doesn’t on death row.”

**~ Wayne County Prosecutor Martin Franz, Cleveland Plain Dealer, May 7, 2005**

“If the death penalty could be imposed by the victim’s family, it’d be a whole different story, but that’s not the way it works. I challenge anyone to go through the same scenario and come up with a better decision than we did.”

**~ Mark Jackson, father of murder victim, on how his family could not have endured a death penalty trial and years of appeals, and instead asked for life without parole, Cleveland Plain Dealer, May 7, 2005**

“I’m a one-man office and there’s just one judge. We had this trial for three weeks and it basically shut down the court system.”

**~ Vinton County Prosecutor Timothy Gleeson on the cost of the death penalty, Cincinnati Enquirer, May 8, 2005**



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## **NATIONAL VOICES**

"The first time I voted for the death penalty, I thought of the law as majestic and that there was very little chance of a mistake... Then you grow up. Look at the DNA evidence – you realize that people can make terrible mistakes."

*~ New York State Assemblyman Joseph R. Lentol (D)  
Washington Post, April 13, 2005*

"Has an innocent man ever been executed? Probably. The judicial system is designed to promote fairness, but anyone who expects perfection is asking for an impossibility. Any revamping might make the system better, but because human nature is involved, it won't make it perfect."

*~ Jim Willett, former Texas Death Row Warden who presided over 89 executions  
Washington Post, May 13, 2001*

"I support a moratorium on the death penalty. The history of the death penalty in Virginia is rife with examples of people being imprisoned for years, who were innocent... Most people who are on death row are poor and cannot afford their own attorneys. Until such a time that the death penalty works fairly and doesn't single people out by race or because of income or other invidious characteristics, there should be a moratorium on the death penalty in Virginia."

*~ Virginia Governor Tim Kaine (D), ontheissues.org, November 2005*

"They are all consuming...They demand not just due process, but super due process."

*~ North Carolina District Attorney Jim Kimel on death penalty cases, which make up less than 1% of his caseload, but devour 1/3 of its resources.  
The News & Record, North Carolina, August 8, 2000*

"If statistics are any indication, the system may well be allowing some innocent defendants to be executed."

*~ Former United States Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor  
Associated Press, July 2, 2001*

"The VLC has represented countless victims' families in death penalty cases and the additional anguish caused by the process is overwhelming. When we first see a client, we silently pray that the prosecutor will decide against pursuing the death penalty, not because we oppose it in principle, but for the victims and the hope that they will be spared the pain, isolation, and despair the death penalty process will inevitably bring."

*~ New Jersey Crime Victims Law Center, founded by the father of a murdered son  
amicus brief to the New York State Court of Appeals, People v Taylor*

"I think it's probably healthy for everyone in this country to re-examine what's happening in their state... No one wants anyone to enter into our judicial system and be wrongly convicted of any crime and suffer any consequences, especially being put to death, if they're not guilty."

*~ Former Kansas Governor Bill Graves (R), Associated Press February 18, 2000*

"I have come to conclude that, in fact, we apply the death penalty in a very arbitrary manner."

*~ Former Virginia Attorney General William Broaddus (R)  
The Virginian Pilot, May 24, 1998*

"I have yet to see a death case among the dozens coming to the Supreme Court on eve-of-execution stay applications in which the defendant was well represented at trial. ...[P]eople who are well represented at trial do not get the death penalty."

*~ Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, April 2001*

"I would like to see us evolve to a point in time where we understand that the death penalty does not reduce violent crime and it is not a deterrent to violent crime... The dollars that we invest in [capital punishment] would be better spent in other places. ... I'm not an advocate for the death penalty. I don't think it works."

~ **Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley (D), Washington Times, December 20, 2006**

"The Assembly passed a bill unanimously which prohibits racial profiling in traffic stops and yet 40 percent of those on death row are African Americans and nobody says a thing about it.... There is not a single person on death row that had a fully funded private defense. If you're rich, you're not going to get capital punishment - period."

~ **Nevada Senator Mark James (R) calling for a moratorium on executions**

"I think a [death penalty] moratorium would indeed be very appropriate."

~ **Rev. Pat Robertson, Washington Post, April 8, 2000**

"Currently, I do not believe that New Mexico's death penalty serves as an effective preventative measure because it is neither swift nor sure. The time period currently allowed for appeals under the process is too long and yet I have come to believe that innocent people might be put to death if these safeguards are not in place."

~ **Former New Mexico Governor Gary Johnson (R)  
Santa Fe New Mexican October 28, 2001**

"I have inquired for most of my adult life about studies that might show that the death penalty is a deterrent. And I have not seen any research that would substantiate that point."

~ **Janet Reno (D), former U.S. Attorney General.**

"It is highly doubtful that the death penalty can ever be administered fairly and impartially."

~ **Iowa Attorney General Thomas J. Miller (D)  
letter to the Iowa General Assembly Feb. 2, 1998**

"This is not a partisan issue. Republicans and Democrats across the country agree that the death penalty does not work."

~ **Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick (D), Press release June 8, 2005**



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