



# SIGN-ON LETTER

*for Religious Leaders*

We, the undersigned faith leaders, reflecting the rich diversity of faith traditions in Connecticut, call upon our elected leaders to repeal the state's death penalty. The public often seeks our guidance on tough issues, and we have concluded that the death penalty fails us. In Connecticut, the law already provides a severe alternative punishment for capital murders – life in prison without the possibility of release.

We join many in Connecticut who question capital punishment due to its record as an ineffective, unfair, and fallible response to violence. The death penalty applies disproportionately to the poor and minorities and puts innocent lives at risk of execution. Since 1973, 139 individuals sentenced to death were later exonerated of their crimes. When a human life is at stake, there is simply no room for error.

As religious leaders, we often serve as resources to victims' families in the aftermath of murder. Given this responsibility, we have a special interest in advocating for policies that serve their needs and promote healing and well-being. There is growing evidence that the death penalty does the opposite: it prolongs victims' pain and delays healing while appeals and reversals force families to relive their trauma.

Finally, we cannot ignore the millions of dollars it costs to prosecute a capital case. In light of the serious economic challenges facing our state and nation, the valuable resources expended on the death penalty would be better invested in programs to prevent crime and meet the needs of victims' families.

As people of faith, we reaffirm our opposition to the death penalty and belief in the sacredness of human life. We urge you, our elected officials, to examine the reality of Connecticut's death penalty and seek ways to achieve true healing for those who suffer because of violent crime. Please support repeal of the death penalty. It is time for Connecticut to move beyond this broken and harmful system.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Faith/Denomination: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Location of Place of Worship: \_\_\_\_\_

Position of Leadership: \_\_\_\_\_

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