

Alphen, James H Testimony in Opposition to Death Penalty Legislation

Committee Members,

I am a resident of Salem and a New Hampshire voter. I am appealing to you to reject this proposed legislation.

As I am sure you know, Pope Francis stated that "the death penalty is inadmissible" (Pope Francis, Address on the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Promulgation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, October 11, 2017) and has committed the Catholic Church "to calling for its abolition worldwide" (Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti on Fraternity and Social Friendship*, Assisi, October 3, 2020, no. 263). As Francis said in 2014, "It is impossible to imagine that States today fail to employ a means other than capital punishment to protect the lives of other people from the unjust aggressor" (Pope Francis, Address to the Delegates of the International Association of Penal Law, The Vatican, October 23, 2014).

With many other Catholics and other people of faith and goodwill, I wholeheartedly agree with Francis. Capital punishment involves the state in the same horrendous crime as those it condemns to death. As Pope Saint John Paul II stated, "not even a murderer loses [...] personal dignity, and God [...] pledges to guarantee this" (Pope Saint John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter Evangelium Vitae on the Value and Inviolability of Human Life*, Rome, March 25, 1995, no. 9).

The death penalty does not bring justice; it is state-sanctioned killing, a travesty of justice. I implore you not to bring this evil practice back to New Hampshire.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

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