

Sign-on-Letter to End Nebraska's Death Penalty *for Murder Victims' Families*

We are individuals and families who have lost loved ones to murder. At a moment none of us could have predicted or prepared for, tragedy robbed from us children, parents, spouses, brothers and sisters, and other family members. Our direct experiences with the criminal justice system and struggling with grief have led us all to the same conclusion: Nebraska's death penalty fails victims' families.

We never asked to be in this position, and would do anything to change it. We realize, however, that nothing can erase the loss that a senseless act of violence brought into our lives. But we can honor the memory of our loved ones and other families who may face tragedy by working for effective responses to violence.

The reality of the death penalty is that it drags out the legal process for decades. In Nebraska, the death penalty is a false promise that goes unfulfilled, leaving victims' families frustrated and angry after years of fighting the legal system. Victims' families in capital cases go back to court for years on end where the press replays the details of the crime again and again. The result is that the defendant is turned into a celebrity while the victim's family waits for a punishment that never comes. This system burdens the vast majority of cases that don't result in a death sentence. And as the state hangs onto this broken system, it wastes millions of dollars that could go toward much needed victims' services.

The death penalty is said to be reserved for "particularly heinous murders". We have difficulty understanding this position. The implication is that other murders are ordinary and do not merit the death penalty. From experience, we can tell you that every murder is heinous, a tragedy for the lost one's family. The death penalty has the effect of elevating certain victims' families above others. Nebraska should be better than that.

As lawmakers consider whether to keep or end Nebraska's death penalty, they truly face a life or death decision. It deserves careful consideration and consultation from the primary stakeholders in the state's system of capital punishment. We urge our lawmakers to make the choice that best serves the interests of victims' families. We urge them to repeal Nebraska's death penalty.

Annie Noonan of North Platte
Sister of murder victim Robert M. Perry

Scott Noonan of North Platte
Brother-in-law of murder victim Robert M. Perry

Mary Werner of Lincoln

Cousin of murder victim Janet Mesner
Terry Werner of Lincoln
Cousin of murder victim Janet Mesner

Tracey Morris of Omaha
Aunt and adopted Mother of Fonta Whitlock Morris

Mary Lemon of Omaha
Mother of murder victims Renata A. and Sandra L. Brown

Ellen "Elle" Hansen of Lincoln
Aunt of murder victim Alicia DeBolt
Friend of murder victims Latrice Shaner and Angela Goddard

Joyce Sheppard of Omaha
Sister of murder victims Arthur and Curtis
Cousin of murder victims James, and West. Jr.

Leonard Eberle
Father of murder victim Danny Joe Eberle, murdered in Omaha

Yvette Davis of Omaha
Mother of murder victim James Davis
Friend of murder victim Terri Lyn Hall

Lauren Ashley Gage of Kearney
Daughter of murder victim Gary Wayne Gage

Sadie Bankston of Omaha
Mother of murder victim Wendell Grixby

Tricia Moore of Omaha
Mother of murder victim Jer'ray Moore

William Wilson of Chadron
Son of murder victim Connie Wilson
Brother of murder victim Cindy Wilson

Kurt Mesner of Central City
Brother of murder victim Janet Mesner

Dorothy Daly of Scottsbluff
Mother of murder victim William Lance (Bill) Daly

Gabriella Culliver of Omaha

Sister of murder victims Mary Grayer and Charles Grayer

Miriam Thimm Kelle of Beatrice
Sister of murder victim James Thimm

Genifer Davis of Omaha
Aunt of murder victim Jer'ray Moore

Richard Brown of Omaha
Uncle of murder victim Wendell Grixby

Florida Brown of Omaha
Aunt of murder victim Wendell Grixby

Alesia Carter of Omaha
Cousin of murder victim Wendell Grixby

Marvin Robinson of Omaha
Uncle of murder victim Ace Robinson

Priscilla Shelby of Omaha
Mother of murder victim Levi Brown Jr.

Enico Ennis of Omaha
Cousin of murder victim Wendell Grixby
Friend of murder victim Robert Nash

Diana Al-Amin of Omaha
Aunt of murder victim Ace Robinson

Erica Edmonson Glover of Omaha
Wife of murder victim Lee Glover Sr.

Diana Al-min of Omaha
Aunt of murder victim Ace Robinson

Neava Robinson
Mother of murder victim Ace Robinson