

## **Interfaith Statement of Opposition to the Death Penalty**

Dear Texas Legislators, Governor, and other elected officials,

We, the undersigned faith leaders, reflecting the rich diversity of faith traditions observed in this great state, stand together in expressing our deep concerns about the death penalty in Texas. Our concerns are both moral and practical and are rooted in our religious traditions. We write to you today to call for the end of the death penalty in Texas in the belief that this practice is not in the best interest of our State, our justice system, or the safety of our people.

We join with many Texans in questioning our state's death penalty system, which has consistently been shown to be unfair and inaccurate. Texas leads the nation in the number of executions carried out each year. In fact, our state is a significant outlier in this regard, accounting for more than one third of all executions nationwide since 1976. Too often it has not been the crime itself but rather such factors as race, socioeconomics, geography, or politics that have determined the application of the death penalty. And too often, individuals have been wrongfully convicted and spent years on death row for crimes they did not commit.

As faith leaders, we are greatly disturbed by the presence of violence in our communities. We believe that instead of allocating scarce resources to fund an irrevocably flawed capital punishment system, the State of Texas should invest in victim support services, effective law enforcement, drug treatment programs, child and family services, and mental healthcare – all measures that hold potential for preventing future acts of violence. We should do all we can to make sure our state's resources are directed towards the improvement of life, not its destruction.

We firmly believe that those who commit terrible crimes should be held accountable for their actions and we advocate for a justice system that is both humane and restorative. It is particularly important to us to support the victims of violent crimes and their family members in their grief and suffering and promote measures that will facilitate their healing. In responding to one of our greatest societal problems, we believe the state must consider solutions to violent crime that address our communities' need for safety and healing, not retribution.

As people of faith, we take this opportunity to reaffirm our opposition to the death penalty and to express our belief in the sacredness of human life and in the human capacity for redemption. It is this respect for all life that prompts us to join the diversity of voices across the state calling for repeal.

We urge you, our elected officials, to take a closer look at the reality of capital punishment in Texas and ask that you seek alternative ways to achieve healing and justice for all those who suffer in the wake of violent crimes. We thank you for your leadership and we pray for the time when our state is led away from this unnecessary and arbitrary form of punishment.

Sincerely,

**To add your name, please fill out the form below and return to:**

TCADP

*Attn: Interfaith Sign-On Letter*

2709 S. Lamar Suite109

Austin, TX 78704

Fax: 512-441-1808

Email: [interfaith@tcadp.org](mailto:interfaith@tcadp.org)

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Religious Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Congregation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Denominational Affiliation

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/Region

\_\_\_\_ (**Please initial here**) I give TCADP permission to release my name publicly (e.g. in a paid newspaper ad or to the members of the Texas Legislature) as a signee on this letter.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY AND WILL NOT BE SHARED OR MADE PUBLIC:

Do you have a personal or professional relationship with any Texas legislators or other elected officials in your community? Please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Best way to contact you (Please include e-mail, phone, address)

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_