

House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee
February 19, 2019
Testimony of Stanley Bohn
In Support of HB 2282

Sister Murdered

If the murderer of my sister is ever found, Helen's children, her brothers and sisters, and parents have agreed that executing him would only increase our trauma. Thinking about her last moments in her rape and death is already painful. But enduring the string of hearings, trials, appeals and finally killing that mentally twisted person would add to the load we carry.

One of my sister's daughters has participated in an anti-death penalty group and has given presentations to groups in Kansas about why she is against the death penalty. Other family members have signed petitions and contacted legislators in efforts to end the death penalty. We know the economic arguments against executions but this is primarily a moral issue for us.

We victims know what hatred and vengeance does to a community and our own inner life. We can't pretend we are superior and would never feel the need to do criminal actions. We know our own needs for a chance to learn from our mistakes and to have a second chance. I presently relate to a prisoner who was tried as an adult at age 15 and sentenced to 30 years. He no longer thinks as a teen-ager and would live a different way after release. Offenders under addiction or not having had good role –models also need a chance to pay the penalty and then start a different life.

These are times of school shootings, bullying, and internet hatred. Ending executions of criminals in our over-violent, gun carrying society would save our state money that could be used for youth crime prevention, decent pay for prison officers, and vocational training for inmates. And most of all ending executions could help us all to be more caring and humane persons.

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