

You Should Support A Moratorium On Executions In North Carolina

- One of every five death-row inmates in North Carolina may be innocent.
- A majority of North Carolinians support a moratorium on executions. The Academy of Trial Lawyers did polling on the subject in June of 2001. (June 13-15: Strategic Analysis & Messaging; m/e 3.5%).
 - 70% support a moratorium on executions.
 - 65% prefer life without parole to the death penalty for persons with Mental Retardation.
 - 67% think innocent people have been sentenced to death or executed in NC in the past 25 years.
- Nationwide, Republicans, Democrats, prosecutors and defense attorneys agree that the death penalty system is broken and must be fixed before more innocent people are executed.
- Recent studies confirm that the death penalty in North Carolina and elsewhere is being imposed in an arbitrary and unfair way. Those on death row are almost uniformly too poor to afford private lawyers. Some of the most inexperienced and incapable attorneys represent those sentenced to die. Prejudice and location decide death penalty cases. If the victim is white, defendants are far more likely to be sentenced to death. If the murder takes place in certain North Carolina counties, there is a 1000% greater chance of a death prosecution than in other counties.
- More than a third of the people scheduled for execution in North Carolina in 2001 were spared because they had been improperly sentenced to death. Of the remaining two thirds who were executed in 2001, many experienced similar unfairness in their trials and sentencing proceedings. They were executed anyway.
- **Basic Facts about the Death Penalty in North Carolina (from Moratorium 2000 website):**
 - Prohibit Execution of the Mentally Retarded:** YES. However, this state will need to redefine its definition of mental retardation to conform to the recent United States Supreme Court decision Atkins v. Virginia.
 - Life Without Parole:** YES
 - Minimum Age to Eligible for the Death Penalty:** 17 (3 juveniles on death row)
 - Number on Death Row:** 214
 - Executions Since 1976:** 31
 - Race of Defendants:** 120 black (55%), 81 white (37%), 9 Native American (4%), 5 Latino/a (2%), 2 Asian (.9%)
 - Racial Make-up of State Population:** 72.1% white, 21.6% black, 4.7% Hispanic, 1.4% Asian, 1.2% American Indian, 2.3% Other
 - Innocents Exonerated:** YES (3)—Samuel A. Poole (released 1974; 1 year on death row); Timothy Hennis (released 1989, 3 years on death row); Alfred Rivera (released 1999, 2 years on death row).

Columbia University Study Rate of Error in Capital Cases: 71%

Murder Rate: 6.6 per 100,000

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