

MOVING SOCIETY TOWARD MORE HUMANE JUSTICE



NATIONAL COALITION TO
ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY

**NOT IN
MY NAME!**



The Country Needs More of Us

Our 90 MILLION STRONG campaign, launched in 2014, reaches out to a broad base of supporters who can make an impact by sharing their perspectives with families, friends, colleagues, and policymakers. The resulting shifts in attitudes and changes in the law will ultimately persuade the U.S. Supreme Court that it's time for the death penalty to end. We believe in the power of information – and the power of relationships.

Our active education through Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, YouTube, and Instagram provides online users with the information they need to be effective advocates for fairness and justice.

In 1995, only 18% of Americans opposed the death penalty. Currently 38% oppose the death penalty. As we recruit new people for the 90 MILLION STRONG campaign, we invite and encourage them to take action.

- Sign the #HaltAllExecutions pledge.
- Share our message and stories online and in blogs and encourage others to get involved as well.
- Reach out to friends and family and tell them why the death penalty should be abolished.
- Contact local, state, and national policymakers and connect with local organizations fighting against the death penalty.
- Register to vote – then vote!
- Hold forums and meetups.
- Buy t-shirts and be visible in public.
- Attend vigils and protests and share a prayer.
- Volunteer and join our National Action Team.
- Write letters to the editor.

From the Beginning

In 1976 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the death penalty in *Gregg v. Georgia*. In response, advocates for civil rights and civil liberties and religious organizations established the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (NCADP) to move public opinion toward changing that decision.

For 40 years, the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty has led on this issue, raising public awareness, changing attitudes, and moving public policy. We supply powerful information to the general public and to grassroots activists. We motivate them to take action. We engage national and international media in these efforts. Our work has systematically built a national grassroots base for this agenda. We convince people that there are other, better options than state-sponsored killing.

We see ending the death penalty as part of a continuum of developing a more humane approach to criminal justice. We need programs that enhance public safety, offer trauma support for all victims of crime, and provide better access to mental health services, education and jobs that pay living wages.

The 8th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified on December 15, 1791, as part of the *Bill of Rights*:
"Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted."

Innocence

We risk punishing innocent people with death. If we get it wrong, there is no going back.

Since 1976, more than 1,400 individuals have been executed in the United States. As of September 2015, 155 individuals have been exonerated and released from death row. In other words, since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976, for every ten people who have been executed, at least one person was wrongfully sentenced to death and then set free.

Our Goal and Impact

Our work to abolish the death penalty moves forward on two levels:

- First, through person-to-person education and persuasion – the efforts of friends, family, colleagues, and associates.
- Second, through supporting advocacy in legislatures and with governors and other policymakers.

Public support for the death penalty is near a 40-year low. Executions have declined from their peak of 98 in 1999 to 35 in 2014 – this is still too many, but the tide is clearly turning.

Ultimately, through persistence, astute political analysis, and passion, we are acting to abolish the death penalty through a ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court.

“In *Furman* I concluded that the death penalty is constitutionally invalid for two reasons. First, the death penalty is excessive. And second, the American people, fully informed as to the purposes of the death penalty and its liabilities, would in my view reject it as morally unacceptable.”

— Justice Thurgood Marshall, dissenting in *Gregg v. Georgia*

Here's How We Work

The National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty is often ahead of the curve, nimble and resilient. We launched the "Stop Killing Kids Campaign" in 1995. Juvenile offenders were being sentenced to death and executed. We focused attention on the issue with a national public education effort. We saved the lives of two juveniles facing capital charges through our public awareness and grassroots organizing efforts.

In 2004, we worked in South Dakota and Wyoming to pass legislation that excluded juveniles from capital punishment. When the U.S. Supreme Court took the case of *Roper v. Simmons* that same year, it overturned an earlier decision that allowed juveniles to be executed. South Dakota and Wyoming were among a number of states cited by the Court in support of their conclusion that a national consensus against executing juveniles had emerged.

The National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty played a pivotal role in ending the death penalty in Illinois, New Mexico and Maryland. We have provided critical support to repeal efforts and helped defend against schemes to expand the death penalty. Over the years we have built and supported the network of independent grassroots organizations and volunteers that are currently the backbone of the abolition movement and the strategy to end capital punishment.

"You can release an innocent man from prison, but you can't release him from the grave."

— Freddie Lee Pitts, Florida death row exoneree

"If we believe that murder is wrong and not admissible in our society, then it has to be wrong for everyone, not just individuals, but governments as well."

— Sister Helen Prejean

With Your Support We Can Do So Much More

The good news is that the number of those who oppose the death penalty is increasing. There is a change in public attitude, and the number of executions is decreasing.

Your support will allow us to seize this opportunity and continue to build momentum toward full abolition of the death penalty.

A gift of any amount is sincerely appreciated and will be put to good use. Please consider joining with others who share your convictions as a member of one of the following giving levels:

Chairman's Circle – Become a member with your gift of \$2,500 or more per year.

Director's Circle – Join other supporters making gifts of \$500 or more per year.

Torchbearer – Automatic monthly giving at any level helps ensure we have dependable resources to respond at a moment's notice whenever an opportunity for action or a threatened setback arises.

Legacy Society – These individuals have included the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty in their estate plans and/or named the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty as a beneficiary, whether revocable or irrevocable, in their will, life insurance policy, charitable gift annuity, charitable trust, or similar instrument.

You can make your gift online at www.ncadp.org/donate.

Or contact us by phone or mail to make a contribution or to discuss giving opportunities:

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**Please support our efforts by making your gift today to the
National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty.**

Partners in Our Efforts

We have reached out to other national organizations, inviting them to join our 90 MILLION STRONG campaign as partners in advocating against the death penalty and for criminal justice reform. As of September 2015, our partner organizations include:

Alliance for Justice

Amnesty International USA

Blacks in Law Enforcement of America

Catholic Mobilizing Network

Center for Constitutional Rights

Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice

General Board of Church & Society of the United Methodist Church

Lambda Legal

NAACP

National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women

National Council of Churches

National LGBTQ Task Force

Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

Sojourners

Union for Reform Judaism

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