

March 4, 2009

Chairman Michael Lawlor, Chairman Andrew McDonald, and other distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of *HB 6578, An Act Concerning the Penalty for a Capital Felony*.

I am here to make a statement in support of the Death Penalty.

I realize that there is debate about the deterrent effects of the death penalty as well as its costs. But when it is all said and done, I support the death penalty because I believe it is a matter of justice.

Lord Justice Demming, Master of the Rolls of the Court of Appeals in the United Kingdom stated, "...the truth is that some crimes are so outrageous that society insists on adequate punishment, because the wrongdoer deserves it, irrespective of whether it is a deterrent or not."

I firmly believe that we morally should have a death penalty. The true translation of THOU SHALL NOT KILL, is actually closer to THOU SHALL NOT MURDER- that is for thousands of years we have had a strict societal prohibition against unlawful killing, unlawful killing- not any killing.

Society needs our government and specifically in Connecticut our Judiciary Committee to write laws that protects us as well as preserving justice and dignity for victims.

We all have dignity and an inviolable right to life, with dignity and respect. By committing murder- that is unlawful killing- a person has forfeited his right to this inviolable life- he in fact has shown a complete disregard for his victims and himself.

Death penalty opponents also speak of the inviolable sanctity of life- they love slogans- "Do not kill in our name" and the like, thus I assume that death penalty opponents value the lives of murderers more than their victims, specifically to me as a victim you value murderers more than children, Michaela, 11 years old, and Hayley, 17 years old, and more than women, Jennifer, 40 years old.

Because men murdered Michaela, she cannot make homemade sauce, play with her friends, or kiss me goodnight. Because men murdered Hayley, she cannot experience her college years at Dartmouth, row on the Connecticut River, or sit and chat with me. Because men murdered Jennifer, she can no longer comfort a student at Cheshire Academy, talk with her parents and sister, or sit with me on our porch.

If you allow murderers to live you are giving them more regard, more value than three women who never hurt a soul and played by all of society's rules for all their short lives.

My family got the death penalty and you want to give murderers life- that is NOT JUSTICE. Any penalty less than death for murder is unjust and trivializes the victim and the victims family. It is immoral and unjust to all of us in our society.

Thank you for your thoughtful and careful consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,
Dr. William Petit