

Testimony in Support of HB-6425 and SB-1035

March 4, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

We, the members of the Amnesty International: Trinity College Chapter, support the efforts currently passing through the Connecticut State legislature to abolish the death penalty in the State of Connecticut.

Among several convincing moral and pragmatic reasons to support this legislation, our chapter opposes the state's current policy on the grounds of proven racial and socioeconomic bias in countless past death penalty cases. Rarely is it the most heinous criminals who are put on death row. In fact, the State of Connecticut is right alongside Texas as the state in the nation with the worst statistical racial bias. Furthermore, 95% of those accused of crimes punishable by the death penalty cannot afford an attorney.

Pro-death penalty arguments that claim to support victims' families are simply inaccurate. Many victims' families are not only personally opposed to the death penalty, but *do not* gain "closure" from the criminal's execution. In many cases, the execution exacerbates their grieving process. Even more so, cases such as that of Troy Davis—on death penalty in the State of Georgia since 1991—demonstrate how often death penalty policy attempts to execute criminals with legitimate proof of innocence.

Please take a look at the hard facts and reconsider death penalty policy in the State of Connecticut by supporting this new legislation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Kacevich
President: Amnesty International, Trinity College Chapter