



SIGN-ON LETTER *for Victims' Families*

We are individuals and families who have lost loved ones to murder. At a moment none of us could have predicted or prepared for, tragedy robbed from us children, parents, spouses, brothers and sisters, and other family members. Our direct experiences with the criminal justice system and struggling with grief have led us all to the same conclusion: Connecticut's death penalty fails victims' families.

Our view on the death penalty may come as a surprise. Supporters of ending the death penalty often face the question: "What if it were your loved one who was murdered?" For each one of us, that question has ceased to be hypothetical and become a reality.

We never asked to be in this position, and would do anything to change it. We realize, however, that nothing can erase the loss that a senseless act of violence brought into our lives. But we can honor the memory of our loved ones and other families who may face tragedy by working for effective responses to violence. The death penalty, rather than preventing violence, only perpetuates it and inflicts further pain on survivors.

The reality of the death penalty is that it drags out the legal process for decades. In Connecticut, the death penalty is a false promise that goes unfulfilled, leaving victims' families frustrated and angry after years of fighting the legal system. And as the state hangs onto this broken system, it wastes millions of dollars that could go toward much needed victims' services.

Some believe that they stand with victims' families by supporting the death penalty for "particularly heinous murders." We have difficulty understanding this position. The implication is that other murders are ordinary and do not merit the death penalty. From experience, we can tell you that every murder is heinous, a tragedy for the lost one's family. The death penalty has the effect of elevating certain victims' families above others. Connecticut should be better than that.

As lawmakers consider whether to keep or end Connecticut's death penalty, they truly face a life or death decision. It deserves careful consideration and consultation from the primary stakeholders in the state's system of capital punishment. We urge our lawmakers to make the choice that best serves the interests of victims' families. We urge them to abolish Connecticut's death penalty.

Denise Afield of Avon

Cousin of Nancy Bishop Langert, Richard Langert, and their unborn child

Henrietta Beckman of Hartford

Son Randy Beckman was murdered

Roger Beckman of Hartford
Brother Randy Beckman was murdered

Deborah Begin of Terryville
Aunt Roberta and Uncle Ronald Ahrlich were murdered

Sara Begin of Terryville
Great Aunt Roberta and Uncle Ronald Ahrlich were murdered

Antoinette Bosco of Brookfield
Son John and daughter-in-law Nancy Bosco were murdered

Elizabeth Brancato of Torrington
Mother Barbara McKitis was murdered

Kathryn P. Bushnell of Enfield
Cousin Martin Potter was murdered

Juan Candelaria of New Haven
Grandmother Carmen L. Colon was murdered

Gail Canzano
Brother-in-law Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Jane Caron of Thomaston
Aunt Dorothy McIntyre was murdered

Wendy Lou Cates of Willimantic
Niece Kim Rivera as murdered

Delois Charles of Derby
Sons Terrence S. Ham and Howard Charles Jr. were murdered

Sarah P. Cheney
Father Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Tim Coffee of Stamford
Aunt Cornelia Crilley was murdered

Colleen Coleman
Brother-in-law Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Shereese Cook of Hartford
Cousins Sammuell Drummer, Anthony Alexdria, Kenneth Waden, and Tristan Cook were murdered

Victoria Coward of New Haven
Son Tyler Coward was murdered

Dwight Davis of Norwalk
Cousin Horace Williams was murdered

Catherine Ednie
Brother David Joseph Froehlich was murdered in Georgetown

Walter H. Everett
Son Scott Everett was murdered in Bridgeport

Wayne Everett
Brother Scott Everett was murdered in Bridgeport

Samantha Fasanello of Fairfield
Mother Valerie Fasanello was murdered

Frank Fazio of Stamford
Uncle Phillip Fazio was murdered

Jocelyne S. Ferrer of Plainville
Son Henri-Robert Ferrer was murdered

Nancy Filiault
Sister Katherine Kleinkauf, niece Rachel Kleinkauf, and nephew Kyle Kleinkauf were murdered in Guilford

Gina Flagg of Hartford
Cousin Randy Beckman was murdered

Kristin Froehlich
Brother David Joseph Froehlich was murdered in Georgetown

Susanne Fusso of Middletown
Mother was murdered

Sunny Khadjavi of Shelton
Father John Finseth was murdered

Kenneth Fredeen of Monroe
Aunt Virginia Brace was murdered

Bart Gassinger of Woodbury
Sister Lisa Gassinger-Melo was murdered

Drew Harris of Cheshire
Aunt Marian Harris Evans was murdered

Laura Harrison of Manchester
Aunt Colletta Tripp was murdered

William Harshaw of New Britain
Son William Harshaw Jr. was murdered

Jeff Israel of Bristol
Grandfather Bernhart Theise was murdered

Pamela Joiner of Hartford
Son Jumar Joiner was murdered

Paul Labounty of Willimantic
Cousin Donald John was murdered

Carol LaBotz
Nephew Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Arthur Laffin
Brother Paul Laffin was murdered in Hartford

Fran Laffin
Brother Paul Laffin was murdered in Hartford

Maureen Laffin
Brother Paul Laffin was murdered in Hartford

Cheryl Machado of Willimantic
Uncle Tommy was murdered

Janna Marazita
Brother Scott Everett was murdered in Bridgeport

Maria Melendez of Hartford
Son was murdered

Tiffany Mitchell of Hartford
Grandfather was murdered

Robert Nave of Waterbury
Cousin Joseph Ricupero was murdered

Daniel O. Otte
Uncle Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

David Otte
Uncle Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Debra B. Otte
Brother-in-law Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Elizabeth Otte
Uncle Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Erin M. Otte
Father-in-law Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Jonathan E. Otte
Father Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Katelind Otte
Uncle Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Maxwell Otte
Uncle Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Michael P. Otte
Brother Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Timothy J. Otte
Brother Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Stephanie Papillo of West Hartford
Aunt Valerie Papillo was murdered

Marie Pellegrini of Plantsville
Son Joseph Pellegrini was murdered

Mahogany Phillips of New Haven
Father Lavius Phillips, cousin Laron Phillips, and cousin Ricky Cooper were murdered

Renee Robinson of Waterbury
Grandmother Corrine Derovin was murdered

Carmen Rodriguez of Hartford
Son Carlos Garcia was murdered

Wanda Lynn Short of Danbury
Cousin Joseph Hawkins was murdered

Cindy Siclari of Monroe
Sister-in-law Janet Siclari was murdered

Diana Siclari of Monroe
Aunt Janet Siclari was murdered

Erik Siclari of Monroe
Aunt Janet Siclari was murdered

Kevin Siclari of Monore
Aunt Janet Siclari was murdered

Kristen Siclari of Monroe
Aunt Janet Siclari was murdered

William Siclari of Monroe
Sister Janet Siclari was murdered

Carol Silva of Willimantic
Nephew Chris Mickey Lord was murdered

Karen Smith of Danbury
Uncle Errol Jones was murdered

Elizabeth Stein
Cousin Gary Stein was murdered in New Haven

Anne Stone of West Hartford
Son Ralph was murdered

Fred Stone of West Hartford
Son Ralph was murdered

David J. Tuttle of Woodbury
Sister-in-law Lisa Gassinger-Melo was murdered

Mary van Valkenberg
Brother John and sister-in-law Nancy Bosco were murdered

Barbara Voss
Brother Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

Jeremy Voss

Uncle Thomas E. Otte was murdered in Hartford

William Voss

Brother-in-law of Thomas E. Otte, murdered in Hartford

Frances Watson of Meriden

Aunt Mattie Lee Dukes was murdered

Deborah Zane of New Milford

Cousin Margaret Polizzi was murdered

