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 Asfield 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 Sammuel 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 Lavias Phillips, cousin Laron Phillips, and cousin Ricky Cooper were murdered_

Renee Robinson of Waterbury
_Grandmother Corrine Deroin 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 Monroe  
*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*