



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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Testimony

In Support of Raised Senate Bill 280 An Act Revising the Penalty for Capital Felonies

Judiciary Committee
March 14, 2012

Honorable Chairs, Senator Coleman and Representative Fox, Honorable Vice-Chairs, Senator Doyle and Representative Holder-Winfield, Ranking Members, Senator Kissel and Representative Hetherington, and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Raised Bill No. 280, AN ACT REVISING THE PENALTY FOR CAPITAL FELONIES.

I support Raised Bill 280 which will make a class A felony of murder with special circumstances a crime punishable by life imprisonment without the possibility of release and not a crime punishable by death.

The 2010 Death Penalty Information Center's annual report states, "executions declined by 12 percent compared to 2009" across the country, with a national drop in death sentences of 50 percent from the 1990s to the first decade of the 21st century (DPIC, 2010). A May, 2010 Lake Research Partners national poll canvassed 1,500 registered voters of which 61 percent chose alternative punishments over the death penalty, such as life imprisonment without the possibility of release. Seventy-one percent were opposed to the death penalty to prevent executing innocent people (DPIC, 2010). The very thought of an innocent person put to death because of errors in a case should be a clarion call to abolish a penalty of death.

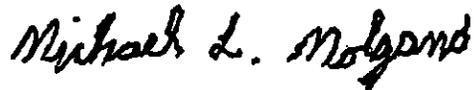
I would never attempt to put myself in the position of those who lost loved ones to a heinous crime. I can understand their outrage and petition for retribution. However, in meeting with Connecticut residents who lost a member of their family to a violent crime and who oppose putting to death the person responsible, the common sentiment expressed was that taking the life of the murderer would never be compensation for the life of their loved one. They are certain no solace would ever come of this extreme action.

Life imprisonment without the possibility of release should not be thought of as an alternative to the death penalty. The sentence holds severe consequences when one considers the magnitude of time a person will serve, life. A person permanently remanded in prison under this penalty is forever removed from free society, a loss of life in my opinion. Moreover, if by chance anyone serving a life sentence is later found innocent due to errors in a case, the risk of a wrongful death is removed; the State of Connecticut is able to err on the side of life and therefore allow justice to be truly served.

Please pass Raised Bill 280.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael L. Molgano". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'M' and 'L'.

Michael L. Molgano
State Representative, District 144
Stamford

Death Penalty Information Center. (2010, December). *The Death Penalty in 2010: Year End Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/documents/2010YearEnd-Final.pdf>