

City of Durham Resolution to Repeal the Death Penalty and Use the Savings to Assist Murder Victims' Families and Help Prevent Violent Crime

WHEREAS our community upholds the values of fairness and due process for all people; and,
WHEREAS the criminal justice system, including the death penalty, starts at the local level, with local tax dollars and local employees used to enforce the law; and,

WHEREAS the administration of the death penalty affects all of our community's residents as victims and victims' family members, as offenders and offenders' family members, and the community at large; and,

WHEREAS a fair criminal justice system benefits the entire community; and,

WHEREAS 140 innocent people have been exonerated and released from death row after having been wrongfully convicted and spending a combined more than four centuries on death row; and

WHEREAS North Carolina's death penalty has led to seven innocent people being condemned to die in the modern era before they were exonerated; and

WHEREAS intentional and systematic racial bias has been shown to have a "persistent, persuasive and distorting role" in North Carolina's death penalty (*North Carolina v. Robinson*, 2012; Michigan State University, 2010; UNC, 2000;); and

WHEREAS less than one percent of murders lead to death sentences and rarely involve "the worst of the worst" defendants (www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/abrariness); and

WHEREAS states without the death penalty have had consistently lower murder rates (www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/facts-about-deterrence-and-death-penalty); and,

WHEREAS North Carolina statutes already involve life imprisonment without the possibility of parole as an alternative to the death penalty; and

WHEREAS the death penalty annually costs more than 10 million taxpayer dollars per year more than life imprisonment without parole (Duke University, 2009); and

WHEREAS millions of North Carolina taxpayers' dollars spent on the death penalty could be used for crime prevention and programs to offer assistance to murder victims' families;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that **The City of Durham, North Carolina** calls on the Governor of North Carolina and our Legislators in the N.C. General Assembly, the President of the United States, and our Representative and Senators in the United States Congress to adopt policies and executive orders and to enact legislation repealing the death penalty in North Carolina and in the federal, and military jurisdictions and to use funds saved to assist murder victims' families and for crime prevention programs, and to ratify a suspension of all executions until such legislation is enacted into law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Governor of the State of North Carolina; the state Senator and the State Representative in the N.C. General Assembly who represent this community; the President of the United States; the two U.S. Senators from North Carolina; and, the Member of the U.S. House of Representatives representing this community.