

Sample Letter Writing Tool

Here's what we know: Legislative offices get many communications. The most important thing to a legislator is that the person who is contacting them lives in their district and is therefore a potential voter. E-mail may or may not get counted, but it is the vital first step, even if all they look at is the subject line. Phone calls get tallied, and if you can briefly and politely speak with the legislative aide working on that issue, that's great. And the most impactful way to communicate with your elected officials is a personal letter, hand written, if possible. We know of legislative offices where the elected official personally reviews every hand written letter received.

We are asking individuals to send personal letters in support of HB 183 and SB 103, and to invite others in your community to do so as well. Let us know how we can assist you in creating a letter writing party or other such event to bring friends together in this action.

Dear [*Legislator's Name*],

[*Introduce yourself!*]

I am writing you today to ask you to support HB 183/SB 103, which would abolish Ohio's death penalty. I live in [Name of city or your district] and [I voted for you (if true)].

[*You may choose to end your letter here!*]

Or

I oppose the death penalty because...[*choose one, all or fill in your own*]:

The death penalty hurts the co-victims, or the families of murder victims subjecting them to decades of what-ifs and re-opening old wounds every time the case is mentioned in the news. Resources currently allocated for the death penalty should be repurposed for the needs of victims' families.

Attorney General David Yost recently said that the system is "breaking down" and yet Ohioans are paying millions of dollars each year for a broken death penalty.

Public opinion is clear that Ohioans no longer want to pay for this system and favor repeal.

185 people have been officially exonerated and freed after serving time on death row for a crime they did not commit. For every five people Ohio has executed, one person has been exonerated and released from death row. No one knows how many more innocent people are under sentence of death, or how many have actually been executed. Surely we can all agree that the risk of executing even one innocent person is too much.

Law enforcement officials are on the record discussing how traumatic it is to take part in an execution. We can do a better job protecting the physical and mental health of our prison workers by eliminating the death penalty.

We know that we can be kept safe and hold dangerous individuals accountable for their actions without the death penalty because it's what we do the vast majority of the time.

[Thank the legislator.]

[Signature]