



Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

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House Subcommittee Set to Hear Repeal Bill

Texas one of a dozen states considering legislation to end the death penalty

(Austin, Texas) — On Thursday, March 12, 2009 at 8:00 AM the Capital Punishment Subcommittee of the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee will hold a public hearing on House Bill (HB) 682, which calls for the repeal of the death penalty in Texas. The hearing will take place at the State Capitol in Room E2.016.

“National momentum is clearly shifting in the direction of abolition,” said Representative Jessica Farrar, the author of HB 682. “This year at least 10 other state legislatures are giving serious consideration to bills that call for the repeal of the death penalty. This hearing provides members of the Texas House of Representatives with a long overdue opportunity to engage in open dialogue about our state’s capital punishment system.”

Rep. Farrar introduced a similar bill -- which strikes the death penalty as a sentencing option from all relevant sections of the Texas Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure -- in the 80th Legislative Session, but it did not receive a hearing. This year, Subcommittee members will hear testimony from numerous individuals whose direct experiences with the death penalty have led them to oppose its implementation. This includes murder victims’ family members and former prosecutors.

“It is time for elected officials to address the flaws and failures of the capital punishment system, including the risk of executing the innocent, the exorbitant cost of the death penalty, and the arbitrary and biased way in which this punishment is carried out in Texas,” said Kristin Houlé, Executive Director of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (TCADP). “TCADP strongly supports HB 682 and urges the full House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee to vote yes on this important legislation.”

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