

*Thank you for adding your name to this Texas Rabbi and Cantor statement of opposition to the death penalty. This letter was developed by TCADP Advisory Board Member Rabbi Samuel Stahl, Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Beth-El - San Antonio, Texas, in consultation with several Rabbis and staff of Jewish institutions. All Rabbis are eligible to sign, as long as you live in Texas. Each Rabbi who wishes to sign should fill out the second page and return it to TCADP or complete online at [tcadp.org/texas-rabbis-statement-on-the-death-penalty/](http://tcadp.org/texas-rabbis-statement-on-the-death-penalty/). You can keep the text of the letter for your records.*

*TCADP will keep a running list of signatories, with all of your contact information. We intend to release the letter and the list of signatories to the media and to elected officials (legislators, governor, etc.) in 2015 during the next legislative session as part of a Faith Leader Lobby Day. TCADP greatly appreciates your help in gathering signatures for this effort. Please let us know if you have any questions about the plans for the letter in our campaign by contacting [info@tcadp.org](mailto:info@tcadp.org). We look forward to hearing from you!*

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### **TEXAS RABBIS' AND CANTORS' STATEMENT OF OPPOSITION TO THE DEATH PENALTY**

We acknowledge that the Bible permits and even imposes the death penalty for certain situations. Yet the Talmud, the most authoritative Jewish work of Jewish law and practice today, severely limits the possibility of executing criminals, even murderers, and makes its application nearly impossible.

In the Talmud, the Rabbis observe that a court that executes a criminal even once in 70 years is a bloody court. Thus it is clear that Rabbis of the Talmud considered capital punishment to be repugnant, even though they could not completely abolish it because of its Biblical precedent.

Embracing this Rabbinic perspective, the State of Israel does not impose the death penalty, even for terrorists who have murdered countless numbers of its citizens. In its 64-year history, it has executed only one criminal, Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi leader responsible for the deaths of millions of Jews during the Holocaust.

We also have learned that capital punishment is not a deterrent to crime and that the possibility of error in mistaken executions is exceedingly great. Because our Jewish tradition emphasizes the sanctity of human life, we are convinced such sanctity, already violated by murder, is not enhanced by capital punishment.

Therefore, we, the Rabbis and Cantors of Texas, representing diverse Jewish denominations, vigorously oppose the death penalty and strongly support its abolition in Texas.

To add your name, please fill out the form below and return to:

TCADP  
Attn: Texas Rabbi Sign-On Letter  
2709 S. Lamar Suite 109  
Austin, TX 78704  
Fax: 512-441-1808  
Email: info@tcadp.org

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Religious Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Synagogue

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jewish Movement

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/Region

\_\_\_ **(Please initial here)** I give TCADP permission to release my name publicly (e.g. in a paid newspaper ad or to the members of the Texas Legislature) as a signee on this letter.

\_\_\_ Please contact me about the Faith Leader Lobby Day and Press Event to be held during the 2015 Texas Legislative Session as I would be interested in participating if my schedule permits.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY AND WILL NOT BE SHARED OR MADE PUBLIC:

Do you have a personal or professional relationship with any Texas legislators or other elected officials in your community? Please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Best way to contact you (Please include e-mail, phone, address)

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to receive periodic communications from TCADP regarding the work to end the use of the death penalty in Texas.