

Ohioans to Stop Executions

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://otse.org/ohio-resumes-executions-concerns-remain/>

Campaign and Advocacy

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[Hannah Kubbins](#) / August 24, 2017

The first of more than 20 planned executions has taken place in Ohio, but questions concerning how and when the death penalty is imposed and whether it is employed equitably continue.

The July 26 execution of Akron child killer Ronald Phillips was the first to take place in the state in more than three years.

Prior to his execution, American Bar Association President Linda A. Klein issued a statement urging Gov. John Kasich to delay resuming executions until all the reforms recommended in the ABAs 2007 Ohio Death Penalty Assessment Report had been implemented.

The American Bar Association, which does not take a position on the use of the death penalty as a means of punishment, worked with a team of Ohio legal experts, including the late Ohio Supreme Court Justice J. Craig Wright, to produce the report.

According to Klein's statement, the team found a number of problems, including significant geographic and racial bias that resulted in an inconsistent and unfair administration of the state's death penalty and inadequate protections for individuals with mental illnesses.

Klein said a handful of reforms have been passed in Ohio over the last two years and several important bills are pending in the legislature, adding some individual prosecutors have taken the initiative to implement important reforms to improve the fairness of capital litigation in their counties.

However she said, Despite this progress, the majority of the assessments recommendations have not been adopted statewide. Delaying the planned executions until all needed reforms have been implemented will not result in the release of death row inmates, but it will allow time to ensure that Ohio's death penalty system comports with due process.

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine's office declined to comment on the American Bar Association statement.

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