

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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COLUMBUS, OhioThe Ohio Senate today passed a bill that will cloud state executions in secrecy, making the death penalty process less accountable to Ohioans. The American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio is decrying the passage of House Bill 663 and calls for Gov. John Kasich to veto it in the following statement by Mike Brickner, senior policy director for the ACLU of Ohio.

Ohio lawmakers rushed through this legislation in the final days of the session, making the specter of more problems with future lethal injections likelier. This legislation is unequivocally bad for Ohio. It will shield drug manufacturers and medical professionals who assist in executions from public records laws and will make it difficult for courts to monitor executions. It also will provide immunity to those individuals from ethical or professional reprimands for their participation in executions. The public, courts, and condemned prisoners should not be kept in the dark. They need to understand how executions are to be carried out and that they will comply with our laws. HB 663 not only violates the public's trust, it is fundamentally wrong and will certainly be challenged in the courts. We urge Gov. Kasich not to sign it.

The bill will go to the Ohio House for a concurrence vote before arriving at Gov. John Kasich's desk.

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