

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.acluohio.org/en/news/ohio-asking-wrong-questions-about-death-penalty>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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Earlier this month, members of the Ohio General Assembly gathered to receive information about capital punishment in Ohio. The Joint Legislative Study Committee on Victims Rights listened to a representative from the Office of the Attorney General while he discussed [the problems Ohio is having](#) obtaining the needed drugs to execute people.

Currently, capital punishment in Ohio is in a holding pattern. It seems our state has run out of lethal injection drugs. Those drugs largely come from Europe, where there is broad opposition to the death penalty and an official ban on providing drugs when they can be used to put someone to death.

This has caused a lot of scrambling among Ohio lawmakers and officials. One of the results was last sessions [House Bill 663](#), which keeps secret many of the ways Ohio goes about the execution business, including who provides Ohio with its death drugs. The state keeps trying desperately to obtain needed drugs so it can resume the killing. However, these attempts resulted in at least one setback when the Food and Drug Administration [reminded our state](#) in June 2015 that importing unapproved drugs is illegal.

In short, we have a state government that is thoroughly incompetent when it comes to killing people. In addition, it cannot find the drugs it needs to continue doing so. And lets not forget the [growing number of exonerations](#) from death row in the Buckeye State.

Combine this with a system where guilt of the convicted defendant is far less of a factor than that persons race, income or geography and it is clear our elected officials are asking the wrong questions. The Study Committee on Victims Rights heard testimony and asked questions about ways Ohio can resume its death machine, including alternative methods.

Ignoring the Evidence Isnt Leadership

Where are the leaders in our Statehouse asking why Ohio still has a death penalty and what purpose it serves? Capital punishment is rejected by most of the planet. The number of U.S. states ending its practice continues to grow. Even [former Ohio prison officials](#), and at least [one current Supreme Court of Ohio justice](#), now condemn it.

Despite all the information about how flawed the process is, the people it disproportionately effects, and its ineffectiveness, legislators still want to kill more people.

But all our state seems interested in is finding a way to continue doing it and starting as quickly as possible. Despite all the information about how flawed the process is, the people it disproportionately effects, and its ineffectiveness, legislators still want to kill more people.

That is not leadership. It is ignorance with severe ramifications and serious consequences. How many more screwed up executions will it take? How many more people must be exonerated? How much more proof must we see that capital punishment does not achieve any of its intended goals? Those are questions worth asking, not when and how can we resume this shameful practice.

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