

# Terry Lenamon on the Death Penalty

Sidebar with a Board Certified Expert Criminal Trial Attorney



**Terence M. Lenamon** is a Florida Bar certified expert in the area of criminal trial law. With over 17 years experience he has built a reputation as one of Florida's most respected criminal defense lawyers. His defense has been sought by many high-profile clients and has led him through 20 first-degree murder trials and eight death penalty cases. That experience has brought him national recognition as a go-to commentator on death penalty issues. He is the force behind both [deathpenaltyblog.com](http://deathpenaltyblog.com) and Florida Capital Resource Center ([floridacapitalresourcecenter.org](http://floridacapitalresourcecenter.org)), and can be reached at [terry@lenamonlaw.com](mailto:terry@lenamonlaw.com).

## Illinois May Abolish Death Penalty in 2010 – The Perfect Storm for a Finance Challenge to Capital Punishment

POSTED ON JANUARY 4, 2011 BY TERRY LENAMON

As the first week of 2011 unfolds, the **Illinois Legislature is facing a huge budgetary crisis**: it is \$13 billion in the red, and this includes over \$6 million of unpaid bills. If Illinois were a person, it would be getting a lot of bill collector phone calls.

In fact, **Illinois is in very, very bad financial straits**: its credit rating ties with California as being the lowest in the country, and Moody's Investor Service gives Illinois a negative rating on its financial forecast. Which means things are very bad up Chicago way, and the Illinois Legislature has some very difficult budget decisions to make. Things like cutting child care, increasing tuitions.

Which brings them to the death penalty.

The Illinois House has a bill before it, moving to abolish the death penalty. Of course, **there is growing opposition** – particularly among prosecutors. They are planning a big press conference this week – and the **state attorneys are working hard, drumming up public support** for keeping things status quo, capital punishment-wise.

Meanwhile,opponents of capital punishment are telling the media today that they think they have the votes to make the bill into law. There's a window of opportunity for the bill to pass which changes later in the month.

This is politics – and politics in the state where Chicago resides – so only time will tell whether or not abolishing the death penalty will indeed happen in the State of Illinois, no one is considering this as anything but a fight at this juncture.

### **The Perfect Storm for a Finance Fight**

However, given the dire straits that the State of Illinois faces, if there is ever a situation where financial arguments could kill the death penalty, this may be it. The Perfect Storm may exist in Springfield, Illinois, this month.

Currently, there are **10 people on Illinois Death Row**. However, the Illinois Governor imposed a moratorium on executions in the state, so executions are not occurring. Prosecutors are free to seek the death penalty in their cases, of course: that hasn't changed.

Let's see what happens.