

# The Death Penalty: Do We Need the Option?

Just yesterday, the Illinois Senate approved abolition of the death penalty, after the House confirmed the measure last week. Obviously, there was much controversy on the bill, as arguments were as conflicting as night and day. Some said it wasn't needed, especially since it had not been used in over 15 years, and costs about \$20 million, annually. Others stressed the need for prosecutors to have the option of using the death penalty in seeking information from criminals, and successfully punishing for fitting crimes.

To be honest, my take is one of content in its demise. Wait! Don't mistake me for soft on crime in any way. I am 100% behind criminals paying for their harms to society, and being reprimanded in the most adequate of ways. I can even offer a list of suggested punishments if anyone is interested. But, let's look at some points about the death penalty:

- Although revenge is something we all may seek at some point or another, does the person really suffer when getting subjected to the death penalty? Doesn't their family suffer more, since they deal with the loss, rather than the person who got to simply leave the earth? It creates 2 grieving families. Justice?

- Criminals are not deterred by the possibility of a death sentence when contemplating or executing their crimes.
- It is more of a punishment for a criminal to serve a sentence of life in prison without the chance of parole. They are missing moments with their families, and secluded from the life they clearly couldn't properly handle. They also miss out of the options prisoners with lower-level crimes may receive while behind bars
- Lethal injections are costly and humane. What a contradiction to the motive!?! The punishment seeks to avenge a death with death, yet does it in such a pricey and cleanly way. Is the message "killing is wrong", or not? Surely this money can go elsewhere, and the total conflict of a "nice killing" can be eliminated.

Share with us your thoughts on the death penalty. Are you strongly for, or against it? What does your state do?