



ABOLITION NOW!

Kentucky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

P.O. Box 3092 Louisville Kentucky 40201-3092

(502) 636-1330

email: staff@kcadp.org

website: www.kcadp.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT DONALD VISH – 502 299 0155

Administration of Justice Troubling in Kentucky; Report Highlights Flaws in System

The Kentucky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty is not surprised that the comprehensive evaluation of all death penalty cases performed by an assessment team of Kentucky legal experts – former KY Supreme Court Justices who were trial court judges, law professors and other attorneys – has found serious problems with the use of the death penalty in Kentucky.

What is surprising is that there continues to be the hope that this broken system of death sentencing can be repaired. In 1972 the U. S. Supreme Court found implementation of the death penalty to be arbitrary, discriminatory, and as randomly applied as lightning striking.

Nearly 50 years ago, the American Law Institute (ALI) published a model law intended to guide states in the fair application of the death penalty. It became the legal standard for death penalty administration in the United States. Now the ALI has withdrawn support for the law after concluding that the system it created does not work and cannot be fixed. Michael Traynor, president emeritus of the ALI, called the action "...a striking repudiation from the very organization that provided the blueprint for death penalty laws in this country." (Los Angeles Times, 2-4-10).

Rather than spend thousands, no millions, of dollars trying to fix this system, Kentucky lawmakers need to replace it with lengthy prison terms, including life without parole. This cost-effective severe punishment has the added benefit of giving victims' family members justice immediately and ensures that Kentucky will never execute an innocent defendant.

Until repeal of the death penalty takes place, the Governor should establish a formal moratorium as Governor George Ryan did in Illinois and as Governor John Kitzhaber did in Oregon in November. This will put Kentucky back on the path that restores credibility and fairness to our justice system.