

How to Pass a Resolution: It's Time to End the Death Penalty in Alameda County

What you don't know about the death penalty may surprise you.

Most people are surprised to learn that Alameda County has historically been one of the most aggressive death sentencing counties in California, and has sent more people to death row than any other Northern California county.¹

Most people are surprised to learn that sentencing people to execution costs the county far more than permanent incarceration. A recent report found that a trial seeking execution in California costs at least \$1.1 million *more* than a trial seeking permanent imprisonment, also called "life without parole."²

Some people are also surprised to learn that since 1973, 127 people have been freed from death row in this country based on evidence that they were in fact innocent. The conviction of innocent people and other problems with the death penalty have led a majority of nations, most major religions, and now 14 states in the U.S. to reject the death penalty.³ The District Attorney in San Francisco has rejected the death penalty in favor of other alternatives, allowing her to invest in proven violence prevention programs.

Now that we know, what should we do?

The Alameda County Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty asks organizations, religious and community groups to adopt a resolution calling for:

- 1) The District Attorney of Alameda County to stop pursuing the death penalty; and
- 2) The District Attorney and the Board of Supervisors of Alameda County to invest in solving homicides, violence prevention, and effective public safety programs.

Attached is a draft resolution. The reasons for adopting the resolution may vary for each group. Thus, groups may modify the preamble ("whereas" statements). We ask that each resolution call for the two solutions stated above.

The Coalition will gather these resolutions to present to county officials. By adopting a resolution, you will be adding your group's voice to the call for change in policy on this critical issue.

The Coalition can provide speakers to address your group, as well as additional fact sheets and background information. For more information, please contact Natasha Minsker, ACLU of Northern CA, nminsker@aclunc.org, 415-621-2493.

¹ See Fact Sheet, "Alameda County Leads Northern California in Death Sentences."

² See The Hidden Death Tax, a Report by the ACLU-NC, available at http://www.aclunc.org/docs/criminal_justice/death_penalty/The_Hidden_Death_Tax.pdf

³ See Death Penalty Information Center, www.deathpenaltyinfo.org (innocence, religion, world views).