

Death Penalty Focus
870 Market St. Ste. 859 San Francisco, CA 94102
Tel. 415.243.0143 - Fax 415.243.0994 - www.deathpenalty.org

P R E S S A D V I S O R Y

For Immediate Release
April 29, 2011

Contact: Stefanie Faucher, 415-243-0143 or stefanie@deathpenalty.org

***Gov. Jerry Brown Cancels Plan to Build New Death Row
New Poll Shows 63% Voters Support Converting Death Sentences
to Life Without Parole***

San Francisco – On the heels of the dramatic announcement by California Governor Jerry Brown that he was cancelling the plan to build a new death row housing facility at San Quentin State Prison, a [new poll by David Binder Research](#) found that 63% California voters would support the Governor in taking further action by converting all 713 death sentences to life without the possibility of parole to save the state more than \$1 billion in five years. The poll of likely voters found that only 28% of voters opposed the idea, and that voters from across the political spectrum support this idea, with support from Independent voters the strongest at 70%. It is worth noting that 64% of Democrats and 58% of Republicans support the idea. Rarely do majorities of all three political groups agree on complex issues such as this one.

The [Governor's press release](#) also noted, "This project would have added another \$356 million to the state's debt, at an annual cost of \$28.5 million in debt service that would have come out of General Fund dollars."

While acknowledging the need to "address the housing needs of condemned inmates" Governor Brown did not indicate how he intends to deal with California's boondoggle death penalty.

"We commend Governor Jerry Brown for his decision to stop the construction of a new death row housing facility. However, now the Governor needs to take the next step and convert all existing death sentences to life without the possibility of parole. We need a comprehensive solution that both addresses the state's budgetary priorities and deals with its dysfunctional death penalty," stated Mike Farrell, President of Death Penalty Focus.

"California's death penalty system is broken. Replacing the death penalty with a sentence of life without parole will save our state hundreds of millions of dollars each year-- freeing up money for education and healthcare while keeping our communities safe and ensuring that no innocent people are ever executed," stated Stefanie Faucher, Associate Director of Death Penalty Focus.

Death Penalty Focus is a national non-profit organization dedicated to educating the public about the death penalty and its alternatives. Founded in 1988, the organization is based in San Francisco. For more information, visit: www.deathpenalty.org.

###