



# Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, Governor

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Letter of support for HJR1, April 16, 2013  
House Judiciary Committee

Chair Barker, Vice Chairs Garrett and Krieger, and Representatives Brent, Cameron, Hicks, Olson, Tomei, and Williamson:

The Oregon Commissions on Black Affairs and Hispanic Affairs are submitting our letter of support on amending the Oregon Constitution to prohibit the death penalty. We know you have heard testimony on this subject and wish to positively encourage you as you consider acting on this resolution.

Communities of color are overrepresented in prison populations including those waiting on death row, and while we support the position that justice be served without fail on those who have committed the worst crimes, there are other mechanisms to assure such justice including life in prison without option for parole. We believe it is especially important to use these other means of justice as advances in forensic science and re-consideration of evidence each year have overturned the sentences of innocent people in prison, including prisoners on death row. Not often is life without parole considered a cost effective measure but in death row cases, which usually involve expensive appeals, it has been shown to be less costly as well.

We believe it is time that the people of Oregon reconsider their interests in the death penalty. Oregon's First Citizen has made his position clear and we hope the debate may be visited again by all citizens on the next ballot.

Isaac Dixon, Chair, OCBA

Andrea Cano, Chair, OCHA

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