

1 **OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
2 **HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1**
3 **TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**
4 **IN FAVOR OF REFERRING A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE PEOPLE OF**
5 **OREGON TO PROHIBIT THE DEATH PENALTY**

6
7 Frances G. Nichols Anglin

8
9 February 26, 2013

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11 I have been against the death penalty since I was 12 years old. I am now 63. I can remember
12 sitting at our dining room table back there in 1962 and putting my heart and soul into writing probably
13 the first real essay I ever wrote arguing earnestly against the death penalty. I have never waivered. I am
14 horrified by the death penalty. I am horrified by violence of any kind in thought or deed by anyone.

15 I know there are many good and decent people who support the death penalty for many reasons
16 but not because they are hateful, vengeful, or mean. They firmly believe it serves society's best interests.
17 I respectfully disagree in the strongest terms. I believe with every fiber of my being that the death
18 penalty does not serve the best interests of an enlightened society, and *it is an impossibility for it to ever*
19 *do anything but perpetuate more violence!* To paraphrase Thich Nhat Hanh in Living Buddha, Living
20 Christ, if we say that someone is evil and we use the same means he has used, we are exactly like him.
21 Trying to overcome evil with evil is not the way to make peace.

22 On the night of Oregon's last execution a minister was asked why he opposed the death penalty.
23 He said "We must tame the murderer [hiding] in all of us." I'm sure you know that many more people
24 who are poor, mentally ill, and nonwhite are executed compared to those who are not. There are so many
25 reasons the death penalty is an abhorrence and a blight on our humanity.

26 It requires great courage and strength of character for a person to take a firm stand against a
27 practice that in the long run only degrades, diminishes, erodes, and threatens its society. Please be one of
28 those people. I do favor life in prison without the possibly of parole for the crime of murder, except in
29 exceptional cases, because I do not believe at present mental health professionals can prove with 100
30 percent certainty that an individual who has proven he or she is capable of murder can be cured at this
31 time, and I believe society has a right to be protected from such individuals.

32 Please be one of those people. Please give the citizens of Oregon the opportunity to decide for
33 themselves whether or not they want to continue a practice that is so fatally flawed for so many reasons
34 and cannot be corrected when mistakes are made.