



## DEATH PENALTY AT A GLANCE

### RECENT TRENDS AND STUDIES

DEATH PENALTY STATISTICS	2011	2010	2000
Executions	43	46	85
New Inmates Under Death Sentence	78	104	224
Death Row population (as of Jan. 1, 2012)	3,199	3,242	3,703
Executions Since 1976			1,292
Executions in 2012 (as of Apr. 20)			15

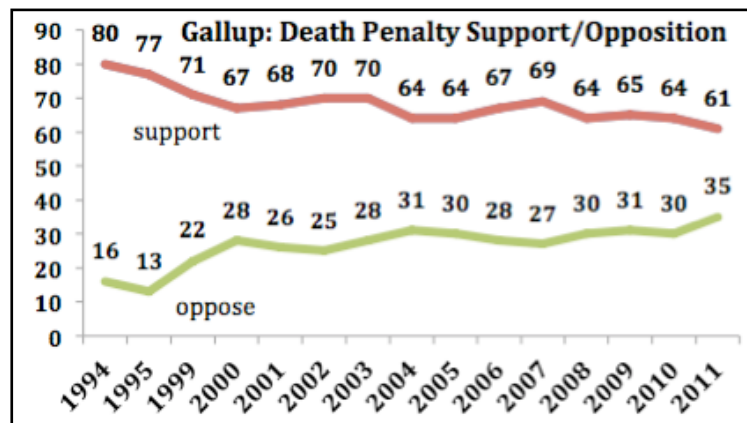
- New death sentences dropped to 78 in 2011, representing a dramatic 75% decline since 1996, when 315 individuals were sentenced to death. It was the first time since 1976 that the country produced fewer than 100 death sentences in a single year.
- Executions have steadily decreased nationwide, with 43 in 2011 and 46 in 2010, representing a 56% decline since 1999, when there were 98.
- Over the last decade, the total population of state and federal death rows has decreased significantly, from 3,703 inmates in 2000 to 3,199 inmates as of January 2012.
- In recent years, Illinois, New Mexico and New Jersey voted to abolish the death penalty. New York's death penalty law was declared unconstitutional in 2004, and the

legislature has repeatedly rejected attempts to reinstate capital punishment. The number of states with the death penalty has recently dropped from 38 to 33.

- Other states, including Maryland, Kansas, Kentucky and California, are likely to consider efforts to abolish the death penalty in the future.
- A new report released on April 17, 2012 by the prestigious National Research Council, titled *Deterrence and the Death Penalty*, stated that studies claiming that the death penalty has a deterrent effect on murder rates are "fundamentally flawed" and should not be used when making policy decisions.

### PUBLIC OPINION

- The 2011 Gallup Poll recorded the lowest level of support, and the highest level of opposition, in almost 40 years. Only 61% supported the death penalty, compared to 80% in 1994; 35% were opposed, compared to 16% in 1994.
- In a 2011 CNN poll that gave respondents a choice between the death penalty and a sentence of life without parole for those who commit murder, 50% chose a life sentence, while 48% chose death.
- In a 2010 poll conducted by Lake Research Partners, 61% of U.S. voters chose various alternative sentences over the death penalty as the proper punishment for murder. Only 33% chose the death penalty.



## STATES WITHOUT THE DEATH PENALTY

(Year Abolished in Parentheses)

Alaska (1957)	Minnesota (1911)	West Virginia (1965)
Hawaii (1957)	New Jersey (2007)	Wisconsin (1853)
Illinois (2011)	New Mexico (2009)	
Iowa (1965)	New York (2007)	<b>ALSO</b>
Maine (1887)	North Dakota (1973)	- Dist. of Columbia (1981)
Massachusetts (1984)	Rhode Island (1984)	
Michigan (1846)	Vermont (1964)	

## NOTABLE QUOTES

*Connecticut leaders, including experts in law enforcement, criminologists, state legislators, and victims' families, have voiced concerns about the death penalty in Connecticut.*

**Daryl K. Roberts**, *Retired Hartford Chief of Police*

"I think the death penalty is in fact a hindrance to law enforcement. I have devoted my career to developing programs that we know would help keep our communities safe: educational programs and programs for community involvement. Some of these programs are suffering in these times of tough budget cuts. If given the choice between our ineffective death penalty or effective community crime prevention programs, I would choose the latter every time." (Testimony Before the Judiciary Committee, March 14, 2012)

**Dr. Khalilah Brown-Dean**, *Associate Professor of Political Science, Quinnipiac University, and murder victim's survivor*

"There are those who say that the death penalty is about bringing closure for victims' families. For us, there is no closure. No sense of peace. Because the arbitrary way in which we decide which lives are more important, leaves us with a system that is far from just. We know that there are disparities based on class, race, and gender when it comes to who is more likely to receive a death sentence." (Testimony Before the Judiciary Committee, March 14, 2012)

**Michael L. Molgano**, *Republican State Representative, Stamford, Connecticut*

"Life imprisonment without the possibility of release ... holds severe consequences when one considers the magnitude of a time a person will serve, life. A person permanently remanded in prison under this penalty is forever removed from free society, a loss of life in my opinion. Moreover, if by chance anyone serving a life sentence is later found innocent due to errors in a case, the risk of wrongful death is removed; the State of Connecticut is able to err on the side of life and there allow justice to be truly served." (Testimony Before the Judiciary Committee, March 14, 2012)

**Dr. John J. Donohue III**, *Professor of Law, Stanford Law School*

In a study of death penalty cases in Connecticut between 1973-2007, Professor Donohue concluded that "the state's record of handling death-eligible cases represents a chaotic and unsound criminal justice policy that serves neither deterrence nor retribution. ... At best, the Connecticut system haphazardly singles out a handful for execution from a substantial array of horrible murders. ... [A]rbitrariness and discrimination are defining features of the state's capital punishment regime." ("Capital Punishment in Connecticut, 1973-2007: A Comprehensive Evaluation from 4686 Murders to One Execution," Stanford Law School, National Bureau of Economic Research, October 15, 2011)