This bill goes before the Senate Judiciary Committee on Monday, March 10 at 10 am. Call your reps now!

Bill Overview

This bill would amend Arkansas' execution protocol to add nitrogen gas as an approved method of capital punishment, in addition to lethal injection. This legislation reinforces a system of state-sanctioned killing at a time when many states and countries are moving away from the death penalty due to its fundamental flaws, including racial bias, wrongful convictions, and inhumane procedures.

Reasons to Oppose House Bill 1489

- **It entrenches a failed and unjust system.** The death penalty in the U.S. disproportionately impacts Black and marginalized communities, with racial bias influencing who is sentenced to death. Since 1973, more than 200 people have been exonerated from death row after being wrongfully convicted, proving the system is deeply flawed and prone to irreversible errors.
- **Nitrogen suffocation has been declared inhumane by the United Nations and veterinarians.** This method risks causing prolonged suffering, violating constitutional protections against cruel and unusual punishment.
- **It ignores the national trend away from capital punishment.** The U.S. is increasingly moving away from the death penalty, with executions and new death sentences at historic lows. HB1489 reverses progress and further entrenches Arkansas as an outlier in embracing capital punishment.
- Opponents of Arkansas House Bill 1489 (HB1489) have raised **significant concerns regarding the bill's provisions on reporting and accountability**. A primary issue is the delegation of critical decisions about execution methods to the Director of the Division of Correction, which some argue violates the constitutional separation of powers by allowing the executive branch to determine execution protocols—a responsibility traditionally held by the legislature. (arktimes.com)
- Additionally, during legislative discussions, critics emphasized the l**ack of transparency and oversight mechanisms in the bill**, expressing fears that this could lead to arbitrary or inconsistent application of execution methods without sufficient public accountability. (arktimes.com)
- These concerns highlight the potential for **diminished legislative oversight and public scrutiny** in the implementation of capital punishment procedures under HB1489.

Arkansas should instead work toward abolishing the death penalty, which is flawed, irreversible, costly, unjust, and inhumane. It's past time to end this failed policy once and for all.

Read more about the use of nitrogen gas in Alabama.

Emailing Your Representative

Dear Representative [Last Name],

I urge you to oppose HB1489, which seeks to entrench a deeply flawed and unjust system. The death penalty in the United States has been repeatedly shown to disproportionately impact Black and marginalized communities, with racial bias influencing sentencing decisions. Since 1973, more than 200 individuals have been exonerated from death row after wrongful convictions—clear evidence that the system is prone to grave and irreversible errors.

Furthermore, the proposed method of execution—nitrogen suffocation—has been deemed inhumane by the United Nations and veterinary experts. This method risks prolonged suffering, violating constitutional protections against cruel and unusual punishment. Implementing such a practice would not only be morally indefensible but could also invite costly legal challenges.

HB1489 ignores the national trend away from capital punishment. Across the country, executions and new death sentences are at historic lows as states recognize the death penalty's failures. By moving forward with this bill, Arkansas would further isolate itself as an outlier rather than joining the growing momentum toward abolition.

Instead of reinforcing a system that is costly, unjust, and inhumane, Arkansas should take meaningful steps toward ending the death penalty once and for all. I urge you to reject HB1489 and work toward policies that uphold fairness and human dignity.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[City, State, ZIP Code]

[Your Email]

[Your Phone Number]

Finding Your Representative's Contact Information

Use this link to find contact information for your representative.

https://arkansashouse.org/about/contact-us