August 21, 2025

Governor Sarah Sanders State Capitol 500 Woodlane Street Little Rock, AR 72201

# RE: Letter from Arkansas Faith Leaders on the Death Penalty

Dear Governor Sanders.

We, the undersigned faith leaders from Arkansas, urge you not to restart executions in our great state. We are especially concerned about the proposed method of gas asphyxiation whether through the use of masks or any form of gas chamber. We implore you to look at the recent scientific study and eyewitness accounts of gas executions to ensure our state does not engage in torture.

Arkansas has the means of keeping society safe without violating the inherent human dignity of every person. We need to do more to help victims in the aftermath of tragedy by providing emotional and financial support and services that help promote healing and recovery, instead of focusing solely on what happens to the person who caused harm. It also denies an opportunity for redemption and healing, and drains resources that could be better used serving all victims and preventing crime in the first place. Resources would be better spent preventing child abuse, providing mental health care and substance abuse treatment, and by investing in community safety programs.

Our call not to restart executions in our state is an expression of our desire to uphold a humane vision of seeking safety through acknowledging harm, repairing the harm as able, and changing society so the harm can't happen again, which honors the sacred dignity of all people, including both victims and those who have caused immeasurable harm. Like many of Arkansas's civil leaders who share our values, we long to see the mercy, compassion, equity, and justice of God reflected in public policies that promote safety, human dignity, and healing for all our citizens.

Together, we prayerfully urge you to investigate the problems associated with execution by means of gas suffocation and continue to recognize the value of every human life. Execution by means of gas suffocation is at odds with recognizing the inherent human dignity in every person.

Respectfully,

\*Titles are for identification purposes only.

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