

2015 RES. 7 ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY IN PENNSYLVANIA

RESOLVED, that the 145th Convention of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania call upon Governor Tom Wolf to continue the death penalty moratorium he has placed in effect and to introduce and support legislation to eliminate the death penalty in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

RESOLVED, that this resolution and GC Resolution D025 be forwarded to Gov. Wolf and to governors in all states where the death penalty is still legal, encouraging them to submit and support legislation in their respective states to abolish the death penalty.

EXPLANATION: Resolution D025 of the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church (set forth in full below) reaffirmed General Convention's longstanding call to put an end to the death penalty in the remaining thirty-one states and in federal jurisdictions, with over 3,000 persons awaiting execution, where the death penalty is still enforced, and that the death penalty is disproportionately applied to the poor and to minorities and is on direct opposition to the witness of Jesus.

Since 1958, The Episcopal Church has affirmed its opposition to the Death Penalty on three occasions, the last time at General Convention 1991. At present, state-sponsored executions continue in the United States even though DNA evidence shows that innocent people are being executed and states are now using lethal injections from private manufacturers that have no government oversight. The specific drugs used in lethal injections are no longer available in the United States because European drug manufacturers refuse to sell them in America for such use. FBI studies show that the death penalty is not a deterrent

to crime. The holy Gospel prohibits the intentional taking of life. Jesus Himself was the victim of the death penalty in his day. The time is right for the Church to take on a more focused and direct role of advocacy and public witness by urging our parishes and dioceses to organize groups and form coalitions to put an end to the death penalty in their states and Federal jurisdictions.

GC Res. D025:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church reaffirm its longstanding call to put an end to the death penalty in recognition that the death penalty remains legal in thirty-one states and in federal jurisdictions, with over 3,000 persons awaiting execution; and that the death penalty is disproportionately applied to the poor and to minorities and is in direct opposition to the witness of Jesus; and be it further

Resolved, That this resolution be forwarded to governors in all states where the death penalty is legal, encouraging them to submit and support legislation in their respective states to abolish the death penalty; and be it further

Resolved, That this resolution be forwarded to the bishops in all states where the death penalty is legal, encouraging them to appoint task forces of clergy and lay persons to develop a witness to eliminate the death penalty, and requesting that these bishops report back on their actions to the Standing Commission on Justice and Public Policy prior to the 79th General Convention.

Proposed by The Rev. Pat Strohl