

# THE CONSTITUTION PROJECT



*Safeguarding Liberty, Justice & the Rule of Law*

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## Statement of The Constitution Project on the Task Force to Review the Administration of Ohio's Death Penalty

The Constitution Project commends the Task Force to Review the Administration of Ohio's Death Penalty, sponsored by the Ohio Supreme Court and the Ohio State Bar Association, for its comprehensive review of the state's death penalty system. For more than two years, the Ohio task force -- appointed by Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor and comprising 22 diverse members, many of whom were judges -- examined the state's death penalty system. It [recently issued](#) more than 50 recommendations with the aim to improve the fairness and judiciousness of the state's death penalty. The task force report presents a starting point for legislative and judicial reforms to Ohio's death penalty system, which is currently executing prisoners at a rapid pace compared with previous years.

Beth Wilkinson, co-chair of TCP's [Death Penalty Committee](#), who was a special prosecutor for the Oklahoma City bombing cases, said, "For many years, TCP has looked carefully at the ways states are operating and recommended numerous critical reform. We are glad that Ohio has completed a thorough review of its own processes."

Wilkinson noted the need for all parts of the justice system to examine their roles in ensuring a fairer and more accurate death penalty system, wherever executions may occur. "I know from personal experience that, while it is difficult when you are in the position of making life and death decisions, it is critical to take a step back and examine your actions. In fact, we have a responsibility to do so," she said.

Many of the recommendations in the Ohio task force review parallel those found in The Constitution Project Death Penalty Committee's new, comprehensive report, which it will release on May 7th in Washington, D.C. The new report from TCP will address a range of issue areas from arrest through execution, and will make recommendations to support greater fairness and reduction of the risk of wrongful execution. TCP, like the Ohio task force, takes no position on whether the state should or should not have a death penalty.

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[About The Constitution Project](#)

*Created out of the belief that we must cast aside the labels that divide us in order to keep our democracy*

*strong, The Constitution Project (TCP) brings together policy experts and legal practitioners from across the political spectrum to foster consensus-based solutions to the most difficult constitutional challenges of our time. TCP seeks to reform the nation's broken criminal justice system and to strengthen the rule of law through scholarship, advocacy, policy reform and public education initiatives. Established in 1997, TCP is based in Washington, D.C.*