Statement of Evangelical Leaders on The Constitution Project’s New Report Irreversible Error

As members of diverse Evangelical communities, we applaud The Constitution Project Death Penalty Committee’s extensive and sober review of our country’s death penalty system found in its new report, *Irreversible Error*, released just last week. While searching and thoughtful discourse on the morality of capital punishment is a critical discussion that should continue in all communities of faith, this new report provides us with new – and troubling – information about the reality of the death penalty in America.

Our members are not a monolith. Our faith communities vary on whether the Bible permits society to take the life of another. But we all agree that sunlight must be shown on how this punishment is actually meted out in our country. What this report shows us is that from arrest all the way through the execution process, our system is rife with unfairness and injustice. Even for those of us who believe Scripture permits executions, *Irreversible Error* illustrates vexing problems concerning its just implementation. It reveals an arbitrary, unfair system that too often kills the least among us, sometimes without sufficient evidence of guilt.

Evangelicals are committed to biblical principles of justice, which require proportionality in sentencing, a fair judicial process, and – above all – certainty of guilt. We are also mindful of our core commitment to follow Jesus Christ as Lord, and remember his own unjust execution whenever we think about the death penalty. We call on our communities and congregations to move quickly to examine the findings of the *Irreversible Error* report and to help implement its recommendations, wherever the death penalty is imposed.

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