

April 16, 2025



The International Academy of Trial Lawyers Calls to End the Death Penalty

Position Unanimously Approved by the Board of Directors

The International Academy of Trial Lawyers (the Academy) opposes the death penalty and advocates for its abolition at both the state and federal levels in the United States. The Academy encourages its Fellows to take an active role in promoting awareness of the systemic flaws and inequities of the death penalty and to support legislative and judicial efforts to abolish capital punishment.

WHEREAS the Academy is committed to protecting and promoting the Rule of Law, ensuring equal justice, and promoting the protection of human rights, and

WHEREAS the death penalty has been shown to disproportionately affect marginalized communities, including racial minorities and economically disadvantaged individuals, thereby perpetuating systemic inequities within the American justice system; and

WHEREAS numerous studies and reports have documented the irreversible consequences of wrongful convictions, with over 190 individuals exonerated from death row since 1973, highlighting the fallibility of the system, and

WHEREAS empirical evidence demonstrates that the death penalty fails to serve as a deterrent to crime more effectively than life imprisonment without parole, and

WHEREAS the application of capital punishment imposes excessive financial and moral costs on society and undermines the credibility and fairness of the justice system, and

WHEREAS the inherent cruelty and psychological suffering inflicted by the death penalty are incompatible with the principles of human dignity and the prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment, and

WHEREAS twenty-four states and the federal government maintain the death penalty, with three states currently under gubernatorial moratoriums.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The International Academy of Trial Lawyers authorizes the publication of this position on its official website and in other communications to reflect its unwavering commitment to the Rule of Law, justice, fairness, and the preservation of human dignity.

Unanimously approved by the Board of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers at its Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas, March 27, 2025.

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