

## YOUR VIEWS: DEATH PENALTY: Moratorium still makes sense

Posted by [bblalock](#) April 26, 2009 02:02AM

In June 2006, the American Bar Association issued a report evaluating the fairness and accuracy of Alabama's system for administering capital punishment. The report identified a number of areas in which Alabama's death penalty system falls short in the effort to provide fair and accurate procedures. I was a member of the assessment team that prepared the report.

The members of the assessment team, with one exception, recommended a temporary moratorium on executions until the state has appropriately addressed the areas of concern. That recommendation made sense in 2006 and continues to make sense today.

### **John L. Carroll**

*Dean and Ethel P. Malugen Professor of Law  
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DEATH PENALTY: Should be abolished

In response to The News' survey, I believe we should abolish the death penalty altogether. My Christian faith calls for this response.

If Alabama will not vote to do this at this time, I ask that we temporarily stop executions to make sure they are carried out fairly and without error. But knowing what has happened in Alabama and other states, I don't think we can guarantee that unless many changes are made in the way we do things.

Considering the role that racism and economic status, as well as politics, play in the whole process, including the right currently of judges to override jury decisions in giving a sentence of death, I doubt we can ever execute fairly and without error.

### **Betty Likis**

*Homewood*

DEATH PENALTY: God should determine death

I am strongly opposed to the death penalty for a number of reasons. First and foremost, I believe killing is wrong. When we ask an executioner to inject a prisoner, he is ending that person's life. We are not to determine when a person is to die; that is God's job.

How does ending another person's life impact the executioner? On some level, there must be pain for that person.

Years ago, my aunt was murdered by her husband in front of her young son. What my uncle did was unconscionable; yet killing him would not bring my aunt back and would not take the pain away for their children.

We need to punish murderers to the fullest extent of the law and protect the innocent from criminals. However, there have been too many innocent people killed in the name of the death penalty for us to

continue to pursue the death penalty in any situation.

**Mary Bea Sullivan**

*Cullman*

DEATH PENALTY: Three principled reasons to abolish

There are at least three levels of reasoning as to why we should eliminate the death penalty in Alabama.

Most principled would be to realize it does not do anything for the family of the victim and only harms another family.

Conventional thinking would consider fairness and oppose the death penalty because of the uncertainty of much of the evidence.

Self-interest would recognize how much money the state would save and therefore divert it to improving the quality of life for the citizens.

Diverse types of moral reasoning, but the same conclusion: The death penalty should go.

**Wilton H. Bunch, M.D., Ph.D.**

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