The death penalty is not an effective deterrent to homicide.

A 2012 National Research Council report concluded that no scientific evidence exists to show that the death penalty is an effective deterrent to homicide.\(^1\)

The murder rate is in fact lower on average in states without the death penalty than in states with the death penalty.\(^2\)

The murder rate is 28% lower in states without the death penalty.

The death penalty delays final resolution for victims' families and communities.

Of the 9 current offenders on Washington's death row, an average of 17 years has passed since the year of their crime.\(^3\)

The majority of individuals sentenced to death in Washington have had their death sentences reversed and have received a sentence of life without the possibility of parole.\(^4\)

The death penalty diverts critical resources from other needed public safety programs.

A newly-released analysis of costs to the criminal justice system in Washington State shows that death penalty cases cost on average about 1.5 times more than other aggravated first-degree murder cases, including post-conviction incarceration costs. This increase in costs equals on average $1,152,808 per case that could have been invested in effective public safety services like victim support programs, “cold case” investigative units, and violence prevention.\(^5\)

King County alone has spent more than $15 million in pursuing the death penalty for just three current capital-case defendants.\(^6\)
The death penalty is applied disproportionately across Washington.

A recent analysis of 297 aggravated murder cases in Washington State between December 1981 and May 2014 by a University of Washington professor concluded:

1. There is **large variation about decisions to seek the death penalty** among Washington counties.
2. The specifics of each case - which are presumed to be primary drivers of the decisions in capital cases - account statistically for a small portion of the variation.
3. Factors outside of the legal system do impact decision-making:
   a. Prosecutorial decisions to seek the death penalty were significantly impacted by the amount of publicity about the case.
   b. **Juries were 4.5 times more likely to impose a death sentence on a black defendant** than on similarly situated white defendants.

The death penalty exacts cruel and unusual punishment on individuals troubled by mental illness, intellectual impairments, and the effects of childhood trauma.

A 2014 review of the one hundred most recently executed offenders' social histories found that as many as 87 "suffered from intellectual impairments, were barely into adulthood, wrestled with severe mental illness, or endured profound childhood trauma," and many fell into two or three of these categories.

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1Nagin, Daniel S. and John V. Pepper, editors; Committee on Deterrence and the Death Penalty; Committee on Law and Justice; Division on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education; National Research Council. "Deterrence and the Death Penalty." 2012. Available at http://www.nap.edu/catalog/11363/deterrence-and-the-death-penalty
2http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/deterrence-states-without-death-penalty-have-had-consistently-lower-murder-rates
3http://www.doj.wa.gov/offenderinfo/capitalpunishment/sentencedlist.asp
7Names and stories of exonerated individuals are available at http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/innocence-list/chip-for-freed-death-row and http://conservativesconcerned.org/why-were-concerned

Explore these websites for more information:
http://ejusa.org
http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org
http://conservativesconcerned.org
http://www.ncadp.org
https://www.aclu.org/capital-punishment