

## The Black Caucus and the Latino Caucus of the Pennsylvania Democratic State Committee

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### TWO PA DEMOCRATIC STATE COMMITTEE CAUCUSES VOTE FOR AN END TO DEATH PENALTY

(Philadelphia, PA) This afternoon, both the Black Caucus and the Latino Caucus of the Pennsylvania Democratic State Committee passed a resolution calling for an end to the death penalty. As the two Caucuses focused on the rights of people of color in Pennsylvania, it is critical for us to speak out against this barbaric form of retribution that disproportionately impacts our community. Last Friday, the DNC Platform Committee unanimously voted to include death penalty abolition in their proposed platform. The Committee called the death penalty what it is -- cruel and unusual punishment.

The following statement can be attributed to David Rodriguez, Chair, Latino Caucus:

*"It's no secret that the criminal justice system is fallible. Since 1976, over 150 people have been released from death row after being exonerated. Six of them were here in Pennsylvania. One man, Nick Yarris, spent 21 years on death row before DNA proved he was innocent. You just can't risk executing a person who's not guilty."*

The following quote can be attributed to Phyllis Bennet, (Harrisburg) Executive Director, Black Caucus:

*"You can't convince me that the death penalty is justice. I have had members of my own family murdered and I can tell you that the death penalty doesn't bring closure. That's a lie. It delays the process of healing. Instead of beginning the healing process, families get dragged through years of legal proceedings."*

The following quote can be attributed to Salome Garcia-Johnson (York), Executive Board, Latino Caucus:

*"The death penalty is deeply troubling to people of color because death sentences are sought against us significantly more often than it is against whites. This is especially true when the victim is white. On Pennsylvania's death row, minorities are the majority. It's not that their crimes were more heinous, it's that our society still values human life differently based on skin color."*

The following quote can be attributed to Jacque Whambush, Chair, Black Caucus:

*"I'm proud that our two caucuses have joined together to denounce the use of capital punishment. And I'm particularly proud that the DNC Convention is being held in my home city of Philadelphia. We will be declaring our independence from modern-day lynching in the city that's home to Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell."*

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