



PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, INC.

RESOLUTION ON THE AMERICAN CAPITAL PUNISHMENT SYSTEM

As Black Christians living and participating in American society, we reaffirm and are acutely aware of:

- a.** The sacredness of life and the obligation to "overcome evil with good" as taught in the scriptures;
- b.** The hope and possibility of all to come under the redeeming and transforming action of God;
- c.** The fallibility of human agencies and legal justice;
- d.** The immorality and injustice of capital punishment for persons later proven innocent, intellectually disabled, severely mentally ill and/or those convicted to death sentences due to their race and/or the race of their victims, and/or overzealous prejudice state's and district attorneys;
- e.** Inexcusable inequities exist before the law, enabling many persons of higher economic status and resources to avoid the death penalty while some persons without these resources are unable to avoid the penalty;
- f.** The lack of clear support through the available evidence that capital punishment has a deterrent effect on violent crime;
- g.** The conviction that the emphasis in penology should be upon the process of restorative, redemptive rehabilitation, rather than on primitive retribution through botched executions (*and other forms of execution*);

h. The outsized role that race (*specifically Black Americans who were descendants of slaves and indigenous people*) are negatively impacted by the current criminal legal system and the kinship the death penalty has to lynching in America;

Therefore, the General Governing Board of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. immediately recommends the abolition of the American capital punishment system in states which still practice state sanctioned death and urges churches and members of the Progressive National Baptist Convention constituency to support groups, policy professionals, lawyers and agencies working for the abolition of capital punishment in those governmental jurisdictions of the U.S. where it is still authorized by law.

Adopted by the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. - 2023

Affirmed as a part of the records of resolutions by the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. - August 2023

Combined and Reaffirmed by the Executive Committee of the General Board - August 2023 (General Board Reference #)

POLICY BASE Progressive National Baptist Convention Policy Statement on Human & Civil Rights - Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.

As Progressive National Baptists we declare the following rights to be basic human rights, and we will support programs and measures to assure these rights;

i. The right to human dignity, to be respected and treated as a person, and to be protected against discrimination without regard to age, sex, race, class, marital status, income, national origin, legal status, culture or condition in society;

ii. The right to be free from arbitrary arrest, solitary confinement, unlawful detention and torture;

iii. The right to a just and open trial with the opportunity to confront accusers and the right to humane treatment if incarcerated;

iv. the total and complete abolishment of the death penalty on a state and federal level.

We stand as a governing body and convention of an estimated 2.5 million members formed to give full voice, sterling leadership and active support to the United States of America and the world fighting for human freedom.

Rev. David R. Peoples, President

Dr. Frederick D. Haynes III & Dr. Willie D. Francois III
Co-Chairs, Social Justice Commission