

Kansas House Judiciary Committee
February 15, 2024
House Bill 2782
Testimony of Sr. Mary Lex Smith, SCL
Kansas Coalition Against the Death Penalty
Opposed

Chairperson Humphries and Members of the Committee:

I am a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth and I support our Community response working toward the abolition of the death penalty in Kansas. I myself have opposed the death penalty most of my adult life. As a victim assistant in Wyandotte County I worked with several capital cases. Fortunately we had no death sentences levied during that time.

I am responding today to HR 2782 before the Committee.

HR 2782 would give the Secretary of Corrections the authority to use the “hypoxia” method of execution. This method has been proven to be more inhumane than lethal injection. The person to be executed suffers for an extended period of time as he or she gasps for air. It is gruesome and barbaric for the one being executed and for those who are viewing the death – victims and victims’ families.

I strongly oppose this method of execution – as well as any other means. I ask this Committee and whole legislature not to enact HR 2782 into law. Even going beyond that, I would strongly suggest that the death penalty be abolished in Kansas. Thus, there would be no need to enact this law.

Respectfully submitted,

Sister Mary Lex Smith, SCL

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