

California People of Faith

Working Against the Death Penalty

Educating and Mobilizing Faith Communities to Act to Abolish the Death Penalty in California. Summer 2009

Stand Against Lethal Injections!

We're nearing the end of a two-month period during which the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) is collecting public comments on their revised lethal injection process. This process is a step toward resuming executions in California. Any member of the public may comment on any aspect of the proposed regulations. There are opportunities to express your views in person in Sacramento and via mail from throughout California. Anti-death penalty experts have provided tips to help you sort out the new proposed regulations. You'll find some of these tips below and on the back of this newsletter. It has never been more important to take action! The deadline is June 30th.

Take Action in Sacramento:

A public hearing will be held to receive comments about the proposed regulations concerning the lethal injection process in California. After the hearing, anti-death penalty activists will proceed to the Capitol to share their views with elected officials. Free buses/carpooling from Oakland and San Francisco will be available. For more information please contact Stefanie at stefanie@deathpenalty.org or call Death Penalty Focus at 415-243-0143.

Hearing Date and Place: Tuesday, June 30th, 9am to 3pm
Department of Health Services, The Auditorium
1500 Capitol Ave., Sacramento, CA 95814

Send a Comment from Anywhere in California:

Please submit a written comment on CDCR's Proposed Lethal Injection Procedures. The CDCR is required by law to read and consider every relevant comment. The tips below are to help you with this process.

- Please know that the CDCR will weigh comments only on the execution process, NOT on the legality or morality of the death penalty.
- You are encouraged to make your letter as long as you want, and to include as much information as you want about yourself and your perspective on the death penalty. Please make sure to include at least one comment that is specific to the proposed regulations (see "Stand Against Lethal Injections" on the back for ideas).
- Letters should say that they are regarding the proposed Amendments to Title 15, Article 7.5, Section 3349.
- Please include your name and address in your letter.
- Written comments may be submitted by mail, fax, or email. They must be received by June 30, 2009 at 5:00 pm PDT.

Comments should be directed to:

Mr. Timothy Lockwood, Chief, Regulation and Policy Management Branch, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, P.O. Box 942883, Sacramento, CA 94283-0001

Email: rpmb@cdcr.ca.gov or Fax: (916) 255 5601

CPF Welcomes New Members To Our State Board

CPF recently held elections for new State Board of Director Positions. We congratulate these long-time leaders in California's death penalty abolition movement as they take on additional responsibilities within CPF.

Terry McCaffrey, *President*
Eric Moon, *Vice-President*
Helen Baumann, *Chief Financial Officer*
Richard Carlburg, *Treasurer*
Kent Peters, *Secretary*

Supporting Board Members: Rev. Bruce Bramlett, Patty Carmody, Rev. Michael Carson, Rabbi Jerry Goldstein, Catherine Huston, Frank Z. Leidman, Douglas Seifert, Rev. Alan Senauke, Deacon John Steele, Rev. Dorothy Streutker

Can We Afford the Death Penalty?

The LA County Coalition for Death Penalty Alternatives (CPF is an active member) held a public discussion on Sunday, May 31st at the First AME Church in Los Angeles. The event featured Harvard law professor Charles Ogletree as Moderator. In answer to the question in the event's title, Prof. Ogletree answered, "hell no!" Resounding applause from more than one hundred people in attendance supported Ogletree.

Joining Prof. Ogletree on the panel were Congresswoman Maxine Waters from California's 35th Congressional District; John Streeter, an attorney and former Vice Chair of the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice; Azim Khamisa, who teaches forgiveness through the Tariq Khamisa Foundation (named for his murdered son); and Gloria Killian, who was wrongfully convicted of First Degree Murder. The audience included Senator Gloria Romero, Assembly Member Mike Davis, Activist Mike Farrell, and LA Public Defender Michael Judge.

For more information on the LA County Coalition for Death Penalty Alternatives, please go to: www.EndDeathPenaltyLA.org

CPF Cheers Governor Richardson

New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson received the prestigious Human Rights Award from Death Penalty Focus at its annual Awards Dinner on May 21, 2009, in Los Angeles. The large audience cheered Richardson for supporting and signing his state legislature's law banning the Death Penalty in New Mexico. Richardson spoke movingly of his "long, personal journey" during six years as Governor away from his lifelong "belief" in the death penalty to becoming an abolitionist. Several CPFers approached Richardson during the dinner to express appreciation to him for his strong political example of moral opposition to Death Penalty.

Richardson called on California Governor Schwarzenegger to commute the death sentences of all the men and women on Death Row here to sentences of permanent imprisonment. Richardson concluded his speech to us with words of American inspiration: "In a society which values individual life and liberty above all else, where justice and not vengeance is the singular guiding principle of our system of criminal law, the potential for wrongful conviction and execution of an innocent person stands as anathema to our very sensibilities. That is why I signed this bill into law."



CPF Members Thank New Mexico's Gov. Richardson. Left to right: Marion Scherer, Kathleen Callahan, Richard Carlborg, Gov. Bill Richardson, Rabbi Jerry Goldstein

Position Available

Southern California Coordinator

California People of Faith Working Against the Death Penalty (CPF) is looking for a new Coordinator based out of Los Angeles. This position coordinates programming and handles office duties to achieve the organization's mission of *empowering California's diverse faith communities to work for abolition of the death penalty through education, advocacy, and prayer.*

The So. Cal. Coordinator should be a self-starting, imaginative and enthusiastic person with sincere dedication to the principles of a religious tradition that support moral commitment to abolition of capital punishment as a response to violent crime.

This is a part-time position requiring about ten hours a week. The Coordinator is an "Independent Contractor." Hours are flexible, and the Coordinator can work from home or office. The Coordinator must be thoroughly comfortable with the computer skills and functions of MS Office. Much of the Coordinator's communication will be via Internet and Email. The position will be open in July 2009.

For a complete job description, please visit CPF's website at www.californiapopleoffaith.org.

For more information or to apply please send a cover letter and resume to CPF at cpf@la-archdiocese.org.

Southern California:
Emily Hammargren
(213) 235-8305
cpf@la-archdiocese.org

Northern California:
Terry McCaffrey
(408) 257-1360
terrymc@igc.org

...Stand Against Lethal Injections

Primary Issues Concerning Religious Freedom and Rights

The Constitution, human rights norms, and basic human decency require that before the state takes a person's life, he or she should be provided with full access to and support of appropriate religious advisors. The proposed regulations unduly interfere with the religious rights of the person to be executed and fail to guarantee all necessary religious freedoms.

A. The State Chaplain Cannot be Asked to Disclose Private Communications

The proposed regulations require the State Chaplain to report to the Warden the contents of private conversations with the person to be executed (3349.3.1(e), 3349.3.3(f)). This is an unnecessary violation of the clergy penitent relationship, is contrary to the ethical obligations of clergy, and may violate state law.

B. Accommodation Must be Made for End of Life Rituals

The proposed regulations make no accommodation for end of life rituals such as sweat lodges (3349.3.4(e)). The regulations are silent as to how such requests will be handled. The CDCR previously denied at least one Native American's request to have a sweat lodge prior to execution. The regulations should include a process for requesting and accommodating such rituals.

C. All Spiritual Advisors Should be Allowed Cell Front Visiting

The proposed regulations only permit the State Chaplains to visit the person to be executed in front of his cell to conduct necessary religious rituals (3349.3.4(e), 3349.4.2(b)). All other spiritual advisors are limited to visiting in the common visiting area, a space that may be inappropriate for some rituals such as confessions. All spiritual advisors should be allowed equal access to cell front visiting.

D. A Spiritual Advisor Should be Permitted in the Execution Chamber

The proposed regulations limit the spiritual advisors to visiting in the holding area next to the execution chamber, and do not permit the advisor to accompany the person to be executed into the chamber (3349.3.4(e)(3)). Under the proposed regulations, other individuals are stationed in the chamber, particularly a non guard execution team member (3349.4.5(e)(8)) and the Warden (3349.4.5(f)(1)). Texas has long permitted the spiritual advisor to enter the execution chamber and to touch the person during the execution. There is no legitimate reason to exclude the spiritual advisor from the execution chamber or prohibit physical contact with the person being executed.

Dear CPF Members,

As my husband and I move out of California for employment reasons, I wish you the best of luck. Please know that I will continue to join you in the anti-death penalty movement from afar. As always, I thank you for your continued commitments to CPF.

Sincerely,

Emily Hammargren, CPF Coordinator

Please mail your tax-deductible contribution to:
2049 S. Santa Fe Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90021.

Attach your name,
address, email address,
and phone number.

