

Vote no to HB 2167

My name is Amy James, and my boyfriend Brad Heyka was randomly ripped from his sleep late at night, tortured and murdered along with three of my close friends in Wichita in 2000. A jury of 12 peers to the defendants carefully weighed the evidence and gave Reggie and Jonathan Carr the death penalty. This was the ONLY sentence that fit their crimes. You should not support HB2167 for several reasons:

1. This bill mentions that previous cases will not be impacted, but that if this passes EVERY pending death penalty case will be appealed. Those of you are attorneys know this will happen. Many of the current death penalty cases are 16+ years old, and the family members of the victims have been waiting for the court system to do its job on those cases. This bill will undo any progress those cases have made, cost Kansas more money to redo those cases, cause more pain for the victims' family members, more work for the prosecution, and will bog down the already bogged down legal system.
2. Having the death penalty gives detectives and prosecutors negotiating tools in which to get information. There are examples where the criminal pleaded to life in prison and confessed or gave up valuable information because they did not want the death penalty. Having the law and not having to use it is good news.
3. Kansas has one of the most restrictive death penalty statues in the country. The death penalty today is only used for the worst cases. Over 2,600 Kansans have been murdered since the law was re-instated in 1994, yet it's only been used less than a dozen times. Looking at the list of people on death row and their crimes, they more than earned their sentence.
4. Some have said the death penalty is expensive, but the study I saw underestimated the cost to incarcerate a young person. Jonathan Carr was 20 when he tortured, raped, beat, robbed, and murdered my friends and my boyfriend, so 60 years of incarceration is very expensive. This scenario was not represented in that study.
5. Lastly, and most importantly - do you know a victim of sexual assault or violence? What if this was your daughter, your sister, your spouse, your loved one that was beaten, tortured, sexually assaulted, humiliated, and then murdered? Wouldn't you want the most options in which to prosecute those horrible criminals? Kansas should have tougher laws, not be soft on crime. This bill is slap in the face to victims and the juries that have carefully and thoughtfully given these sentences. Victims need support from you, not the opposite.

I demand that you vote no to Bill 2167. Vote no for Jodi Sanderholm, Greenwood Co. Sherriff Matt Samuels, Brad Heyka, Jason Befort, Heather Muller, H.G., Aaron Sander, Andy Schreiber, Ann Walenta, 18-month old Lana Bailey, her mother Kaylie Bailey, Andrew Stout, Steven White, Carrie Williams, William Corporon, Reat Underwood, Terri LaManno, Karen, Emily, and Lauren Kahler, Dorothy Wight, Miki Martinez, Darren Wormkey, Suzette Trouten, Izabela Lewicka, Lisa Stasi, Sheila Faith, and Beverly Bonner.

You should know these names. Each of these individuals were murdered by a Kansas death row inmate, and their families are watching your votes.

Amy James
Overland Park (formerly of Ellis, Ks and Wichita)
amyscott0215@yahoo.com
913.461.6858 mobile