

**Corrections and Juvenile Justice
In Support of HB 2167
February 13, 2017
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***“We Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, as a community, oppose the use of capital punishment and pledge ourselves to support efforts to abolish the death penalty.*”**

The sisters took this stand after study, prayer, reflection and discussion. For the Leavenworth congregation, which has nurtured life in all its stages for 130 years, this action is an outgrowth of the sisters’ commitment to a consistent ethic of life from conception to natural death.”

The above quote is from a press release on World Day of Peace, January 1, 1989. The Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth have continued our service to this consistent ethic of life for an added 28 years – our service beginning in Leavenworth, Kansas in 1858.

It is not lost on us that the executions would be carried out in our Mother House neighborhood – the Lansing Correctional Center. Many of our Sisters have ministered within these walls for years.

You will hear many great testimonies today about impact on victim families, impact on the prison environment, cost, innocence, etc. In recent years these combined voices have led to a steady decline of the penalty of death in the United States.

I want to close with the message of Pope Francis in his words to the U.S. Congress September 2015:

. . . The Golden Rule also reminds us of our responsibility to protect and defend human life at every stage of development. This conviction has led me, from the beginning of my ministry, to advocate at different levels for the global abolition of the death penalty. I am convinced that this way is the best, since every life is sacred, every human person is endowed with an inalienable dignity, and society can only benefit from the rehabilitation of those convicted of crimes. Recently my brother bishops here in the United States renewed their call for the abolition of the death penalty. Not only do I support them, but I also offer encouragement to all those who are convinced that a just and necessary punishment must never exclude the dimension of hope and the goal of rehabilitation.

With a greeting of Peace, I promise prayers for your reflection and deliberations on HB2167.

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