

R008-0001

10 A RESOLUTION CONCERNING
20 THE DEATH PENALTY

30 WHEREAS: Since 1973, 85 people who were on death row have been exonerated; and,

40 WHEREAS: In Illinois alone, 13 people who have been on death row have been
50 proven innocent and released; and,

60 WHEREAS: There have been numerous examples where former Lieutenant Burge of
70 Chicago tortured 60 people alone to try and get confessions out of them;
80 and,

90 WHEREAS: Over 75 % of those on death row are non-white; and,

100 WHEREAS: In all, only 37 of the over 18,000 executions in this country's history
110 involved a white person being punished for killing a Black person; and,

120 WHEREAS: Since 1976, more than 82 people have been released from prison after
130 being sentenced to death despite their innocence, meaning 1 in 7 death
140 row inmates have been freed after being fully exonerated; and,

150 WHEREAS: President Clinton has called appeals by death-row prisoners "ridiculous"
160 and "interminable," and a law that limits prisoners to a single habeas
170 corpus appeal within one year of conviction; and,

180 WHEREAS: Under this law, many of those released from death row due to innocence
190 since 1976 would be dead; and,

200 WHEREAS: An FBI study shows that states which have abolished the
210 death penalty averaged lower murder rates than states which
220 have not; and,

230 WHEREAS: In the decades since 1976 13 people have been executed who were under
240 the age of 18 when they committed the crime for which they were
250 convicted, with 70 more juveniles on death row currently awaiting 260
execution; and,

300 WHEREAS: Since 1976 34 mentally retarded inmates have been executed; and,

310 WHEREAS: Poor people have no money to hire defense lawyers, and therefore are
320 appointed public defenders who have little or no money to do DNA and
330 other tests; and,

340 WHEREAS: As Stephen Bright, director of the Southern Center for Human Rights,
350 said about the Texas system, "The Texas courts do not even require that
360 defense counsels remain awake during trial. The lawyer representing a
370 defendant named George McFarland, who is now on death row,
380 repeatedly fell asleep and snored during his trial in Houston;" and,

390 WHEREAS: The death penalty kills innocent people, and is a form of cruel
400 and unusual punishment; and,

410 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Maryland Student Legislature calls for a national
420 moratorium on the death penalty.

430 MANDATES: President Bill Clinton
440 House Speaker Dennis Hastert
450 Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott
460 Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle
470 House Majority Leader Dick Armey
480 House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt

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