

OREGONIANS FOR ALTERNATIVES TO THE DEATH PENALTY

Murder Victim Families Against the Death Penalty

Supporters of the death penalty say that we must provide “closure to the family of murder victims. When a murder occurs, the victim’s family wants “justice done” which some feel will provide closure to their grief, pain and suffering;

Families that have suffered the unimaginable pain and sadness of losing a loved one are not uniform in their reactions. Some think that justice will be served and closure can be attained by the execution of the convicted killer. Other family members find this “promise of closure” to be a myth. For them there is no closure, they will always love and remember their lost loved one. They do not see more violence, in the form of executions (which creates yet another victim family) as a way to honor their loved one. They will always remember.

They seek a means of moving on with their lives and reconciliation. For them the seemingly endless appeal trials which continue to re-open the emotional wounds, are exhausting and serve no good purpose.

In Oregon there are many family members who belong to Murder Victim Families for Reconciliation and/or Murder Victim Families for Human Rights, will speak up for life without parole as being the just outcome. The perpetrator is punished, the public is safe and they can try to heal and move on with their lives.

According to Silverton Oregon’s Aba Gayle whose daughter was murdered, “Do not assume that healing means all grieving is over. Lives have been irrevocably damaged. There are scars that never go away. The death penalty just keeps breaking open those scars and causing suffering over and over. The death penalty does not help us heal. It is merely revenge. I feel that an execution would dishonor the memory of my beautiful daughter.”