

Fact Sheet: Death Penalty Costs More & Wastes Resources

Capital Punishment costs more than life without parole:

- Various state governments estimate that a single death penalty case, from the point of arrest to execution, ranges from \$1 million to \$3 million per case.
- Other studies have estimated the cost to be as high as \$7 million.
- Cases resulting in life imprisonment average around \$500,000 each, including incarceration cost.

The millions of dollars spent on capital punishment cuts into resources for other community interests, such as schools, hospitals, public safety, and jobs:

- **FLORIDA:** Taxpayers in Florida are spending an average of \$2.3 million on each execution- over six times what it would cost for life without parole.
- **NEW YORK:** In 1995, the Empire State brought back the death penalty even though the department of corrections estimated that it would cost over \$2 million per case and approximately \$118 million annually. That same year, state leaders complained that there was a budget shortfall and made dramatic cuts in funding for public higher education and health care.
- **NEW JERSEY:** In 1991 New Jersey spent \$16 million to impose the death penalty. The next year the state laid off 500 police officers because they could not afford to pay them.
- **CALIFORNIA:** Counties in the sunshine state pay dearly for the right to kill. “If we didn’t have to pay \$500,000 a pop for Sacramento murders, I’d have an investigator and the sheriff would have a couple of extra deputies and we could do some lasting good,” says Sierra County DA James Reichle.

Information from the website of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, (202) 543-9577 www.ncadp.org
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