We are current or former members of the law enforcement community. As prosecutors, judges, police officials, and correctional staff, we have shown a commitment to keeping Louisiana safe. It is because of this commitment that we cannot support the death penalty and instead call for its repeal. Though we hold varying views on the morality of the death penalty – some of us support it in principle, others do not – we agree that in practice the death penalty fails the people of Louisiana.

The death penalty is ineffective as a law enforcement tool. The Department of Justice’s National Institute of Justice has found that there is no proof that the death penalty deters crime. The certainty of being caught is what deters crime.

The death penalty wastes valuable resources that could go toward effective crime-fighting measures. Louisiana taxpayers pay millions a year to keep the death penalty that could go toward evidence-based crime reduction programs.

The death penalty puts innocent lives at risk of execution. Louisiana leads the nation in death row exonerations per capita.

The death penalty is divisive and can inflict severe trauma on those charged to carry it out. We believe that confidence in law enforcement can be enhanced by effective, evidence-based measures. We are human beings, and it is no small thing to take a life – even the life of someone who has done something terrible.

As current or former members of the law enforcement community, we believe violence is a substantial problem demanding serious solutions, but that the death penalty is an empty, error-prone experiment that does not enhance respect for justice. We as a state deserve better.

Signature: _____________________________________________

Name: _______________________________________________________________

Street: __________________________    City/State/Zip: ________________________

Email: __________________________    Phone: _______________________________

Position(s) in Law Enforcement: __________________________________________

Years of Service: __________________    Location of Service: ___________________

Return this to mcahoon@defendla.org or PJI 1024 Elysian Fields Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70117
You can also find an online version of this letter at www.LaRepeal.org