

Statement on the Death Penalty

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship of Santa Fe, New Mexico

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship of Santa Fe seeks to abolish capital punishment in New Mexico and the United States because we believe that human life is sacred, and because we believe that human beings can change.

We base our position on the Buddha's trainings for non-harming, or precepts, which are guidelines for living our lives ethically. The first of these precepts states: "Aware of the suffering caused by violence, we undertake the training to refrain from killing or committing violence toward living beings. We will attempt to treat all beings with compassion and lovingkindness."

++We believe that killing human beings for any reason is unethical, including killing by states and other governments.

++We believe that capital punishment degrades and brutalizes any society that practices it by teaching the use of violence in reaction to violence.

++We believe that capital punishment does not deter crime, but serves only to exact revenge.

++We believe that capital punishment disconnects us from one another and obstructs the practice of compassion, the basis of all Buddhist teachings.

We therefore urge all our representatives to work to end the death penalty in our state and across our country.

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Buddhist Peace Fellowship: P.O. Box 701, Tesuque, New Mexico 87574