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FJP Statement on Abolition of the Death Penalty in Virginia

[Fair and Just Prosecution](#) Executive Director Miriam Krinsky issued the following statement in response to Virginia Governor Ralph Northam signing into law a bill to abolish the death penalty:

“We applaud the Virginia legislature and Governor Northam for abolishing the death penalty in their commonwealth and moving us one step closer to the end of capital punishment in America.

Time and time again, we’ve seen that the death penalty is a cruel, unjust punishment that is unequally and arbitrarily applied, ineffective at improving public safety and a waste of taxpayer resources. And time and again we are reminded that we have not executed the worst of the worst, but often put to death the unluckiest of the unlucky – the impoverished, the poorly represented and the most broken. We also, tragically, may well have executed the innocent.

Virginia has used the death penalty more than any other state, carrying out [nearly 1,400](#) executions, and trails only Texas in the number of people put to death since 1976. For a state with such a long history of executions to abolish capital punishment is evidence of the immense progress that can be made on this issue and an important recognition that *every* human life has value and dignity.

Yet, we know we still have a long way to go until we reach the day when people are no longer executed at the hands of government. We urge more states and the federal government to take action to abolish capital punishment. If ever there were a time and an opportunity to fortify trust with the American people and exemplify a justice system grounded in racial equity and fairness, that time is now – and it must involve bringing an end to the death penalty in this nation, once and for all.”

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Fair and Just Prosecution is a national network of elected prosecutors working towards common-sense, compassionate criminal justice reforms. To learn more about FJP’s work, visit our [website](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).