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The Death Penalty: The Price of a Broken System

Imagine living in a world where one mistake could easily cost an innocent person's life. Many people believe that the death penalty brings justice and equality but it's deeply flawed. It only causes more harm than good. Instead of keeping us safe, it leads to wrongful executions and unfair treatment. That's why today, I want to talk about why the death penalty should be abolished and why there are better ways to handle crime.

One of the biggest problems with the death penalty is that innocent people have been put on death row. The penal system isn't perfect, mistakes are bound to happen in this world. People have been convicted based on false witness statements, forced confessions, or weak evidence. A study in 2014 estimated that about four percent of the death row inmates are innocent. That means for every 25 people placed in the death penalty at least one of them didn't commit the crime they were guilty of. The worst part? There's no way to fix the mistakes the death penalty makes once someone has been executed. If new evidence comes up later proving their innocence, it's already too late. No justice system is perfect, and as long as there's even a slight chance of error, we should not be doing it at all.

The death penalty is also unfair. Studies show that people of color, especially black defendants, are more likely to get sentenced to death, especially if their victim is white. Moreover, wealth makes a huge difference too. If someone can afford a top lawyer, they have a much higher chance of avoiding the death penalty compared to someone who can't afford a lawyer and writes it with their own power. In other words, who lives and who dies isn't always about guilt, it's often about race or money, and

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that's not real justice. Some people argue that the death penalty defends crime, but research shows that isn't always true. A report from the National Crime Prevention Program found no solid proof that the death penalty prevents crime better than life in prison! Places that don't have the death penalty are often found to have lower crime rates than states that do. So not only is it not fair but it also has no difference in crime rates. On top of that, the death penalty is very expensive. A lot of people think it's cheaper to execute someone than to keep them in prison for life, but the truth is the exact opposite. Death penalty cases cost millions of dollars each year. In California alone, the death penalty has cost taxpayers over four billion dollars since 1978. That money could've gone toward things that actually help society, like better schools, healthcare, and crime prevention programs.

We also need to focus on not preventing crime in the first place. Research shows that access to education, mental health care, and stable jobs helps lower crime rates. Instead of spending millions on the death penalty, we should invest in programs that stop crime before it even happens. Finally, we need a fairer justice system. No one should be sentenced to death because of their race or financial situation. Public defenders need to take action so people who can't afford lawyers still get a strong defense. The system should be reformed to make sure racial bias doesn't play a role in sentencing. If we care about justice, we need to focus on fairness, equality, and rehabilitation, not executions. The justice system should be about protecting society and making it better, not revenge.

Imagine a world where innocent people aren't executed, a place where race and money don't decide who gets the harshest punishments. Abolishing the death penalty is one step toward that goal. It's time to focus on real solutions, ones that prevent crime,

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help communities, and make the justice system fairer for everyone. Start conversations. Share what you've learned. Encourage people to think about whether the death penalty truly delivers justice. Together, we can create a system that values fairness and equality. Thank you.