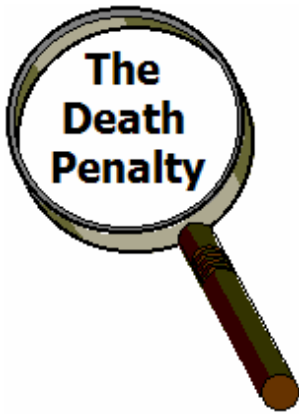


# Tennessee Coalition to Abolish State Killing

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## Cost

**Capital punishment is a far more expensive system than one whose maximum penalty is life without the possibility of parole.**

- A New York study estimated the cost of an execution at three times that of life imprisonment
- In Florida, each execution costs the state \$3.2million, compared to \$600,000 for life imprisonment.
- Studies in California, Kansas, Maryland, and North Carolina all have concluded that capital punishment is far more expensive than keeping

someone in prison for life.

**A 2004 study by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury concluded that:**

- Death penalty trials cost an average of 48% more than the average cost of trials in which prosecutors seek life imprisonment.
- Tennessee District Attorneys General are not consistent in their pursuit of the death penalty.
- Previous research provides no clear indication whether the death penalty acts as a method of crime prevention.

**The greatest costs of the death penalty are incurred prior to and at trial, not in post-conviction proceedings. Even if all post-conviction proceedings were abolished, the death penalty system would still be more expensive than the alternative.**

- Under a death penalty system, trials have two separate phases (conviction and sentencing). Special motions and extra jury selection questioning typically precede these trials.
- More investigative costs are generally incurred in capital cases, particularly by the prosecution.
- When death penalty trials result in a verdict less than death or are reversed, the taxpayer incurs all the extra costs of capital pretrial and trial proceeding and must then also pay either for the cost of incarcerating the prisoner for life or the costs of a retrial (which often leads to a life sentence).

**The death penalty diverts resources from genuine crime control measures.**

Spending money on the death penalty system means:

- Taking it away from existing components of the criminal justice system, such as prosecutions of drug crimes, domestic violence, and child abuse.
- Reducing the resources states put into crime prevention, education and rehabilitation, bulletproof vests for police officers, investigative resources, drug treatment programs, and care and follow-up of people who have been released into the community.

*Putting money into crime prevention, investigative resources, and drug treatment programs—rather than wasting it on the death penalty—could have a significant effect on crime.*