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(Neb.)-Death-Penalty Foes Make Religious, Cost Argument



By: Jeremy Anderson Posted at: 03/13/2013 03:44 PM

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - Death-penalty opponents are pleading with lawmakers to end capital punishment in Nebraska, appealing to their religious and financial sensibilities and arguing that the state has applied it unfairly.

Opponents asked lawmakers Wednesday to advance a repeal measure by state Sen. Ernie Chambers. Chambers, of Omaha, is the Legislature's most outspoken death-penalty opponent.

The sister of murder victim James Thimm testified that the death penalty has prolonged her family's suffering by keeping her brother's killer in the public eye. Thimm's killer, Michael Ryan, has sat on Nebraska's death row for more than 25 years.

Chambers has three co-sponsors on the Legislature's Judiciary Committee, who together make up half of the panel.

The Nebraska County Attorneys Association opposes the bill.