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(Neb.)- Support Shown For Nebraska Death-Penalty Repeal



By: Jeremy Anderson Posted at: 05/13/2013 03:13 PM

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - A "test vote" in the Legislature suggests that a majority of Nebraska lawmakers want to abolish the death penalty, but there may not be enough support to overcome a filibuster.

Supporters of the repeal measure initiated the procedural vote on Monday to publicly gauge their backing. The vote suggests that 26 of the 49 state senators support the repeal, while 18 want to keep the death penalty in place. Five did not vote.

The vote came after roughly four hours of emotional debate. The repeal measure was introduced by longtime state Sen. Ernie Chambers, who has fought for decades to end capital punishment.

Lawmakers would need at least 30 votes to override Gov. Dave Heineman's veto, and 33 to force an end to debate.