



MEMBER OF CONGRESS

BARBARA LEE  
NINTH DISTRICT  
CALIFORNIA

November 10, 2009

District Attorney Nancy O'Malley  
1225 Fallon Street, Room 900  
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear District Attorney O'Malley,

First, I would like to welcome you in your new role as District Attorney for Alameda County, and applaud you as the first woman to hold this position. I look forward to working with you in the future on important legal issues in our area. I would also like to take this opportunity to go on record about my position on the death penalty in our county.

As you may know, I am a long-time opponent of the death penalty, and I would like to respectfully urge you to consider abandoning this harmful practice in Alameda County, as 14 other states and neighboring San Francisco have done.

I believe we must eliminate capital punishment on both the federal and state levels. I was a cosponsor of H.R. 2574, which called for the abolishment of the death penalty under federal law, and I have previously cosponsored legislation that would have provided a temporary moratorium on carrying out the death penalty to assure that persons able to prove their innocence are not executed.

The practice of capital punishment in this country has been plagued by inadequate representation, racial disparity, insufficient access to DNA testing and many other inequities. Life imprisonment without parole is a far better mechanism to protect society while upholding high standards of fairness and justice. For all these reasons, as well as evidence that the death penalty is more expensive than life imprisonment, and my firm belief that the death penalty is neither an effective deterrent nor a valid instrument of justice, I encourage you to consider my request.

Thank you so much for your gracious attention to this matter, and best of luck with your new appointment. Please contact my District Office at (510) 763-0370 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress