

Begin the healing

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As the family member of a murder victim, I applaud District Attorney Kamala Harris' promise to seek permanent imprisonment, not the death penalty, for Edwin Ramos ("Death penalty decisions," Sept. 11).

The death penalty only prolongs a family's wait for justice. By keeping the case open during the extensive, but necessary, appeals process, the same wounds are reopened again and again. Condemning Ramos to permanent imprisonment will take him off the streets and allow the Bologna family to begin healing.

Although there is no "closure" when a loved one is murdered, families do deserve justice. Catching killers provides that. My brother Bob was murdered in 2003, and today, his murder remains unsolved. While we waste millions of dollars on a broken death penalty, most murders in California remain unsolved.

Permanent imprisonment is a better alternative: It allows victims' families to begin their healing process immediately while taking killers off of our streets forever and freeing up public safety resources.

My deepest sympathy goes out to the Bologna family. I hope that justice is delivered swiftly so they may begin their own path to healing.

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Read more: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/chronicle/archive/2009/09/15/ED2R19M1BR.DTL#ixzz0SA2RFL4>