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We, the undersigned faith leaders from different religious traditions in Virginia, stand together in expressing our opposition to our state's death penalty.

Those who are sentenced to death are invariably poor and/or mentally ill. They often suffer from violent family backgrounds, sexual abuse, and substance abuse. They are not the "worst of the worst," but those who are hardest to defend in court due to their personal histories. Additionally, African Americans are disproportionately negatively impacted by the death penalty. Researchers have found that in Virginia, a person is more than three times as likely to be sentenced to death when the victim is white versus when the victim is black.

It is time to address this historical sin and end state-ordered execution in Virginia. It is time for the General Assembly to repeal capital punishment once and for all to ensure that no innocent persons are ever put to death for a crime they did not commit.

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Fredericksburg, VA

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Father James Arsenault, Henrico, VA

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Reverend William Bearden, Lexington, VA

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Reverend Brian Boettcher, Norfolk, VA

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Pastor James Booker, Virginia Beach, VA

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Mr. & Mrs. Carlton Casey, Williamsburg, VA
Father David Casey, Fredericksburg, VA
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