



WHY SHOULD IDAHO EXCLUDE PEOPLE WITH SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS FROM THE DEATH PENALTY?

The Idaho Alliance for the Serious Mental Illness Death Penalty Exemption (IASMIE) is a coalition of mental health providers, law enforcement officials, faith leaders and social justice groups who believe individuals with persistent and documented severe mental illness should be barred from execution in Idaho.

EXEMPTING INDIVIDUALS WITH SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS WOULD:

RAISE AWARENESS OF MENTAL HEALTH IN IDAHO.

The current justice system consistently fails individuals with mental illness due to a lack of preventative community treatment options, restrictions to accessing mental health court, and limits on treatment while incarcerated.

APPLY ONLY TO SENTENCING.

The law does not apply to whether someone is guilty or not guilty, only to whether he or she is eligible for the death penalty. Defendants with severe mental illness who are charged with violent crimes would still be eligible for prosecution and appropriate sentencing, likely life without the possibility of parole.

SAVE IDAHO TAXPAYERS MONEY.

This could amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars per case, which could be used for higher-priority needs such as treatment for people with mental illness, training for law enforcement, and victims' compensation.

BE ONLY A SMALL EXTENSION OF SOMETHING WE ALREADY DO IN IDAHO.

Our state already excludes people with intellectual disabilities from the death penalty. Excluding those with severe mental illness would simply treat these individuals the same way that we already treat people with intellectual disabilities.

60+

The number of those with mental illness or intellectual disability that have been executed in the US since 1983.

5-10%

Estimated percentage of those on death row across the US with serious mental illness.

DEFENDANTS WITH SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS:

- Have a medical impairment – their illness is not a choice.
- Have an impaired ability to understand the world around them, to regulate their emotions, and to control their behavior.
- Are more vulnerable to police pressure.
- Are likely to have difficulty understanding their Miranda rights and the charges they face.