

Terry Lenamon on the Death Penalty

Sidebar with a Board Certified Expert Criminal Trial Attorney



Terence M. Lenamon is a Florida Bar certified expert in the area of criminal trial law. With over 17 years experience he has built a reputation as one of Florida's most respected criminal defense lawyers. His defense has been sought by many high-profile clients and has led him through 20 first-degree murder trials and eight death penalty cases. That experience has brought him national recognition as a go-to commentator on death penalty issues. He is the force behind both deathpenaltyblog.com and Florida Capital Resource Center (floridacapitalresourcecenter.org), and can be reached at terry@lenamonlaw.com.

Illinois Prosecutors Give Media Their Reasons to Keep Death Penalty – Will Governor Quinn Be Swayed?

POSTED ON FEBRUARY 22, 2011 BY **TERRY LENAMON / REBA KENNEDY**

The pressure is building over in Illinois Governor Pat Quinn still has not made his decision on whether or not Illinois will abolish the death penalty. Not that he isn't busy enough with massive blizzards, and a budget that's broke, among other things.

Maybe he's distracted, right? Maybe that is why in [yesterday's Chicago Sun Times](#), the state prosecutors have brought their arguments to keep the death penalty on the books to the media.

If Governor Quinn reads the article, "[Death penalty a bargaining chip prosecutors aim to keep](#)," he'll find some of the same arguments that state attorneys across the country routinely argue to advance capital punishment, i.e.:

1. the death penalty gives prosecutions a big "bargaining chip" in plea negotiations; with death on the table, they argue that they are able to urge suspects to plead out and take a life sentence rather than risk it. So, without capital punishment, state attorneys are going to have to try more cases.

2. without the Illinois death penalty, Illinois loses the ability to get money from the Capital Litigation Trust Fund which is a fund providing monetary support for trials where death is being sought. End capital punishment, and that fund will not there to pay for expenses in trials – which is a big deal to Illinois, which is broke. (All the fund's money reportedly would be going to helping murder victims and training law enforcement.)

3. Prosecutors also argue that victims' families want the death penalty for closure as well as justice.

There's a lot that criminal defense attorneys can argue in rebuttal to each of these arguments; you probably have your opinion on these points, too. Gotta wonder what Governor Pat Quinn's take is on all this