



North Carolina General Assembly  
North Carolina Senate  
State Legislative Building  
Raleigh, NC 27601

**September 24, 2025**

**The Honorable Josh Stein  
Governor of North Carolina  
20301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301**

Dear Governor Stein,

The North Carolina Senate Democratic Caucus writes to you today in unity to respectfully urge you to veto [House Bill 307](#), also known as *Iryna's Law*.

Senate Democrats stand unanimously opposed to this legislation because we believe this bill, as passed, is fundamentally flawed, legally questionable, and morally wrong.

Senate Democrats know full well that North Carolinians want safer communities, and so do we. That is why we worked in good faith before the passage of the bill to strengthen pretrial protections, increase transparency, and address gaps in our mental health system. But instead of staying focused on those goals, Senate Republican leadership made the calculated choice to use this horrific tragedy to try and force open the door to additional barbaric methods of capital punishment. This is an act neither supported by evidence nor by the people of our state.

The death penalty is increasingly out of step with public opinion, [with polls showing](#) that when given a choice between the death penalty and a maximum sentence of life without parole, [a majority of North Carolinians](#) said they favor life without parole.

We must also acknowledge the fact that there is a history in this state of needing to reverse death sentences due to errors, misconduct, and new evidence. Twelve people have been exonerated from North Carolina's death row since the 1970s, eleven of them people of color, and [seventy percent of North Carolina voters](#) said they believed an innocent person had likely been executed in our state. Restarting executions after nearly two decades, especially when we have not properly funded the appellate division of the Attorney General's Office, will only deepen the

risk of wrongful convictions and exacerbate racial disparities in sentencing, all while failing to make our communities safer.

We are especially concerned about the constitutional and logistical chaos that will follow from the death penalty provisions in this bill. The death penalty provisions were added without proper vetting or public input, opening the door to brutal execution methods like the gas chamber, firing squad, and hanging. This legislation implements vague timelines and circumvents unresolved jurisdictional questions, and legal experts warn it is ripe for litigation.

Iryna’s family deserves justice, healing, and real accountability. But justice is not delivered by rushing to bring back a broken system of capital punishment. Justice is reforming our pretrial process, strengthening and fully funding mental health care access across this state so it is available when people are in crisis, making significant investments into our overly stressed criminal justice system, and ensuring tragedies like this never happen again.

This bill, in its current form, does not honor Iryna. It exploits her and her memory for cynical political games that will hurt, not help the people of North Carolina. We urge you to veto H307 and send a clear message that North Carolina's commitment is first and foremost to the safety of our people, justice, integrity, and the rule of law.

Sincerely,

Democratic Leader Senator Sydney Batch	Senator Paul A. Lowe, Jr.
Senator Gale Adcock	Senator Julie Mayfield
Senator Val Applewhite	Senator Graig Meyer
Senator Dan Blue	Senator Mujtaba A. Mohammed
Senator Woodson Bradley	Senator Natalie S. Murdock
Senator Jay J. Chaudhuri	Senator Gladys A. Robinson

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Senator Sophia Chitlik

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Senator DeAndrea Salvador

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Senator Terence Everitt

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Senator Kandie D. Smith

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Senator Michael Garrett

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Senator Caleb Theodros

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Senator Lisa Grafstein

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Senator Joyce Waddell