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against the Death Penalty**

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**Founding Members**

Rodolfo Mattarollo,  
(1939-2014)

Asma Jilani Jahangir  
(1952-2018)

**Secretariat**

Serrano Galvache,26,  
Torre Sur, 10 planta,  
Despacho 10-78, 28071  
Madrid, Spain  
Tel: +00 34 91 3799458

[asunta.vivo@icomdp.org](mailto:asunta.vivo@icomdp.org)

[info@icomdp.org](mailto:info@icomdp.org)

[www.icomdp.org](http://www.icomdp.org)

**Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: New Hampshire becomes the 21<sup>st</sup> US state to abolish the death penalty**

The International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP) warmly welcomes the New Hampshire Senate's historic vote on Thursday 30 May 2019 and the preceding vote by the state's House of Representatives on 23 May, which abolishes the death penalty in the state. This vote overrides an earlier veto by Governor Chris Sununu to earlier votes calling for an end to the death penalty.

On 30 May 2019, the 24-member Senate, by a 16-8 bipartisan vote, followed the 400-member House of Representatives, which voted on 23 May by a 247-123 vote, to end capital punishment in New Hampshire. Both the Senate and House of Representatives votes narrowly constituted the two-thirds majority needed to override the 3 May veto by Governor Chris Sununu. The Governor had vetoed the overwhelming votes by House of Representatives and the Senate, on 7 March and on 11 April 2019 respectively, to abolish the capital punishment in the state.

"I congratulate the New Hampshire legislature for ensuring that their state is free of capital punishment and has become the 21<sup>st</sup> state in the USA to abolish the death penalty. This step follows eight decades when no execution had been carried out in New Hampshire and it is an important milestone as it marks a gradual, but clear, trend of the USA moving away from the death penalty and towards better respect and protection of the fundamental right to life and, thereby, human dignity," said ICDP President Navi Pillay.

The death penalty abolition bill's sponsors included Rep. Renny Cushing, whose father had been murdered in 1988. In a prescient interview with ICDP last year, Rep Cushing said, "Well, I believe that the death penalty is on its way out. I know in New Hampshire for a generation, for 20 years, I have been pressing legislation to repeal the death penalty. Our legislators just voted this year (2018) to repeal the death penalty, our Governor vetoed it, and we were a couple of votes short of overriding the veto. We will bring the legislation next year, and I believe next year we will be the year that New Hampshire will become the 21<sup>st</sup> state to put an end to capital punishment."

New Hampshire last carried out an execution in 1939, and one man, Michael Addison, is under sentence of death after being convicted of the 2006 killing of Manchester police officer Michael Briggs. Reports suggest that the new law would not retroactively apply to Mr Addison, though his fate is unclear.

ICDP believes that the death penalty violates the fundamental right to life proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Judge Navi Pillay  
President of International Commission  
against the Death Penalty



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## **Background**

Composed of 22 Commissioners, who are persons of high international standing and who represent all regions of the world, ICDP acts with total independence and neutrality and works under its President Judge Navi Pillay. ICDP opposes the death penalty under any circumstances. The death penalty violates the right to life enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose 70th anniversary is being observed this year. The Commission promotes the abolition of capital punishment in law in those States that observe a de facto moratorium on the use of the death penalty and promotes moratoriums on executions in States that rarely use the death penalty. ICDP works with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, governments and nongovernmental organizations to further the abolition of capital punishments worldwide.

The work of ICDP is supported by a diverse group of 22 Member-States including two Observer States from all parts of the world who are committed to the abolition of the death.