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New Hampshire Repeals the Death Penalty

New Hampshire's Senate voted today to repeal the death penalty, joining the House in overriding Governor Chris Sununu's veto to become the 21st state in the country to end capital punishment. The bill will not be applied retroactively, leaving the fate of Michael Addison – a Black man and the only person on death row in the state – up in the air.

“Every time the state or federal government takes a life in the name of justice, it degrades that ideal and the entire legal system built on it,” said [Jin Hee Lee](#), Senior Deputy Director of Litigation at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF). “Throughout the country, capital punishment is meted out arbitrarily and discriminatorily, while also failing to provide the deterrent effects its advocates assert. After two failed efforts in the last two decades, supporters of repealing the death penalty in New Hampshire finally have secured a veto-proof majority, bringing the number of states that have repealed or imposed a moratorium on capital punishment to 25. We applaud the persistence of New Hampshire lawmakers in ridding the state of this perverse and inhumane punishment, though we call upon New Hampshire to commute the death sentence of Mr. Addison, who is still at risk of execution. LDF will continue to work towards ending this injustice in the remaining 25 states.”

Over the course of LDF's nearly 80-year history, the organization has consistently opposed the death penalty and challenged its constitutionality. In LDF's early years, Thurgood Marshall traversed the country representing Black Americans, including those on death row in places like Groveland, Florida. In 1972, LDF won *Furman v. Georgia*, which instituted a brief moratorium on capital punishment throughout the United States. Since *Furman*, LDF has continued its unparalleled legacy of defending individuals on death row and, for decades, has published Death Row USA – a quarterly publication compiling the latest statistics on capital punishment across the country.

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.

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