



**Letter of Opposition from the
American Civil Liberties Union of Kentucky**

To Members of the House of Representatives

Regarding Senate Bill 58

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Members of the Kentucky House of Representatives:

The pardon power granted to the Governor is an important and valuable tool enshrined in the Kentucky Constitution and should not be amended under the proposed SB 58.

While the previous governor issued some controversial pardons, the vast majority were uncontroversial. Beyond that specific instance, it is important to note that our founders enshrined this safety valve in our Constitution for very important reasons. Kentuckians who have been convicted of a crime often do not ever have an opportunity for a second chance. We have recently adopted policies allowing for the expungement of some charges and past convictions, but these are incredibly limited in their scope and inaccessible for Kentuckians who cannot afford the associated fees. Pardons offer meaningful relief to people with past convictions who deserve a chance to rebuild their lives. Additionally, some people have been undeniably wrongfully convicted, but have no options for appeal. Consequently, a pardon can serve as a safety valve for innocent Kentuckians. The pardon power is an important tool for many Kentuckians, especially those on death row who are facing execution but may be innocent.

Furthermore, our Constitution is Kentucky's most sacred document. Any changes must be made with extreme caution and deliberation. We should not amend our state Constitution in response to some of the actions of a single governor, especially after the voters chose to not re-elect him. Please vote no on SB 58.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you and your staff are safe and healthy.

Kate Miller
Advocacy Director