

To my pharmacist:

Thank you for everything that you do for our community. Pharmacists are such valued and trusted members of our health team.

I am concerned though about the harm to the reputation of your profession that is being done by a handful of pharmacists who are supplying the drugs used in executions by lethal injection. It seems so contrary to the core values of your healing profession.

I thought you might be interested to know about an independent organization, *Pharmacists Opposed to Participation in Executions (POPE)*, which was founded recently by four prominent pharmacists. Below is their statement of goals and concepts. A “Q&A” written by pharmacists for pharmacists and the positions of other medical professions opposing participation can be found at <http://pharmacistsandexecutions.org/>

Again, thank you for all that you do.

Sincerely yours,

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## **Pharmacists Opposed to Participation in Executions (POPE)**

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### **Our Goal**

To promote discussion by pharmacists and pharmacy organizations on the ethical issues surrounding the participation of pharmacists in legally authorized executions, with the hope that individual pharmacists and pharmacy organizations will take a position opposing their participation in any manner as suppliers of the lethal substances or advisors of the substances to be used in executions.

### **Concepts**

1. Pharmacy is a healing profession, dedicated to the relief of disease or suffering. Participation in executions, either directly or indirectly, is fundamentally contrary to the goals of the pharmacy profession. The “Oath of a Pharmacist” adopted by the by both the American Pharmacists Association and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy—and taken annually by all student pharmacists or new graduates of pharmacy schools—stresses “service to others,” “relief of suffering” and “optimal outcomes” all of which are antithetical to participation in executions.
2. Other healing profession associations have already taken positions opposing participation by their members in executions. Among others, the American Medical Association, American Nurses Association, and American Board of Anesthesiology have addressed this issue in their codes of ethics, and in each case have concluded that participation in executions is contrary to the goals of their respective professions. This is particularly urgent for pharmacy since pharmacists are being called upon to provide drugs to be used for lethal injection.
3. 3. We are not advocating opposition to the death penalty. This is an issue held to be entirely separate from the position proposed in this paper.

<http://pharmacistsandexecutions.org/>