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Victims Families Say End Nebraska Death Penalty

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - Nebraskans whose relatives were murdered are calling on lawmakers to abolish the death penalty, saying it prolongs the suffering of victims' families and wastes tax dollars on endless appeals.

Relatives rallied at the Capitol on Wednesday came in advance of a legislative hearing on a bill to end capital punishment.

Miriam Thimm Kelle, whose brother James Thimm was murdered by Michael Ryan at a farm near Rulo in 1985, says the death penalty has distracted from the needs of victims' families.

The repeal bill was introduced by longtime Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha, who has fought for nearly four decades to end capital punishment.

Of the 33 Nebraska inmates sentenced to death since 1973, three have been executed.

Associated Press