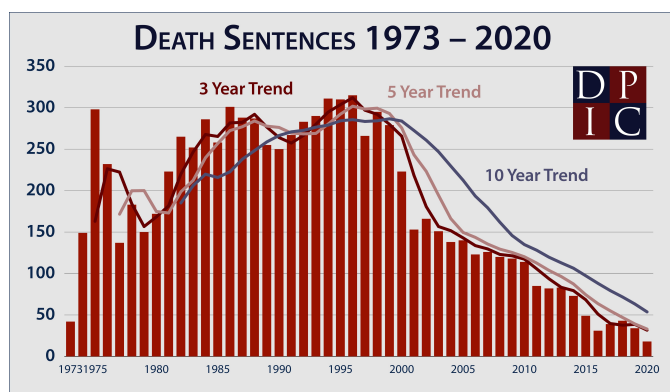
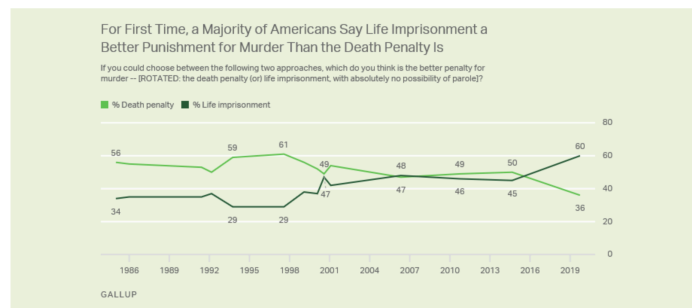


Support for the Death Penalty Weak in Kansas and Nationally

Americans Prefer Life Over the Death Penalty

In 2019, Americans for the first time chose the alternative of life in prison rather than the death penalty as “the better punishment” for murder. In 2014, the same question only had 45% support for life in prison. On this question, there were increases in support for life in prison among Republicans, Democrats and Independents.

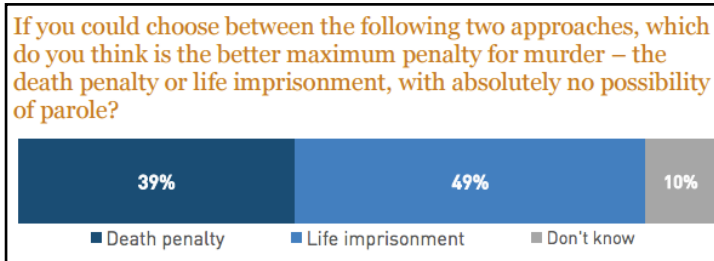


Death Sentences Down: Declining Support from Juries

The death penalty is also falling out of favor with juries, as there has been a sharp decline in the number of death sentences handed down. Death sentences nationally have dropped from three hundred fifteen in 1996 to only eighteen in 2020. This marked the sixth year in a row with less than fifty death sentences. The eighteen death sentences in 2020 came from seven different states.

Kansans Choose Life over Death

In a 2016 Fort Hays State University poll on criminal justice issues, Kansans supported life without parole over the death penalty by a ten-point margin with 49% of Kansans choosing life without parole as the maximum sentence to murder, and just 39% choosing the death penalty.



Kansans are Ready for Change

The 2016 Fort Hays State University poll finds strong public support for criminal justice reform, across all demographic and political groups. A full 93% of Kansans say it is somewhat or very important to make changes to the criminal justice system in Kansas.