Abolish or Not? The True Public Policy of Capital Punishment through the Northeastern Perspective

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The death penalty is a major controversial issue in our society. The paramount question is whether it should be abolished or not. In the case of Furman v. Georgia, 408 U.S. 238 (1972), the Supreme Court ruled that imposition of the death penalty constituted cruel and unusual punishment that violates the United States Constitution. The decision forced both state and the national legislatures to revamp their statutes for capital offenses to assure that the death penalty would not be administered in a discriminatory way. Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Illinois abolished the death penalty due to the uncertainty of its constitutionality. However, that was not the only issue concerning the presence of a death penalty law in the form of a public policy. The purpose of this paper is not to judge whether the death penalty is right or wrong, but to examine the ulterior motives behind the abolition of the death penalty in the states named above.