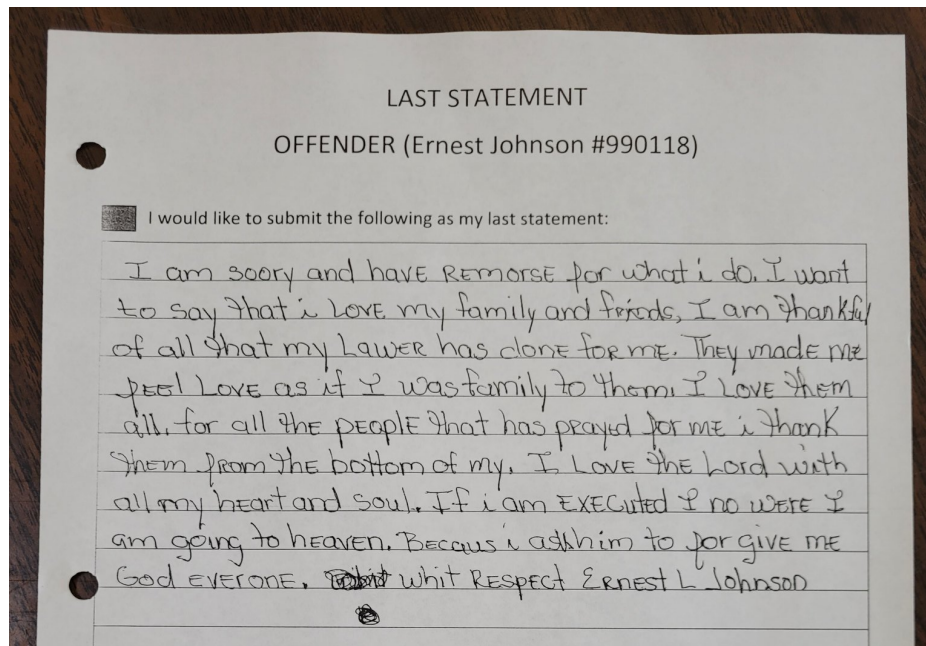


It is the opinion of the student body at the Washington University School of Law that the execution of Ernest Johnson by the State of Missouri on October 5th, 2021 was unconstitutional and morally wrong.

The death penalty has always and continues to be employed in a racially discriminatory and ableist manner. Mr. Johnson had severe intellectual disabilities and subjecting him to the death penalty can only be construed as a gross human rights violation. Mr. Johnson was also a Black man, and his identity and death at the hands of the state cannot be divorced from the history of the police and criminal legal system as being instrumental in the subjugation of persons of color, persons with disabilities, and countless other identities the governing white, patriarchal society wished to marginalize.

For these reasons, among many others, we as students and future lawyers support the abolition of the death penalty.

We leave you with the last statement of Ernest Johnson, presented in his handwriting (alt. text provided and rendered faithfully to Mr. Johnson's script):



Alternative Text: *I am soory and have remorse for what i do. I want to say that i Love my family and friends, I am thankful of all that my Lawyer has done for me. They made me feel Love as if I was family to them. I Love them all. For all the people that has prayed for me i thank them from the bottom of my. I Love the Lord with all my heart and soul. If i am executed I no were I am going to heaven. Becaus i ask him to forgive me God everyone. [Crossed out word] Whit respect Ernest L Johnson [Small circular scribble on the line below.]*