

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE  
GOVERNOR

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## **Gov. Perdue Upholds Racial Justice Act**

### *Vetoes Repeal of Law That Ensures Fair Application of Death Penalty*

**RALEIGH** — Gov. Perdue today issued the following statement on the Racial Justice Act:

“I am – and always will be – a strong supporter of the death penalty. I firmly believe that some crimes are so heinous that no other punishment is adequate. As long as I am Governor, I am committed to ensuring that the death penalty remains a viable punishment option in North Carolina in appropriate cases.”

“However, because the death penalty is the ultimate punishment, it is essential that it be carried out fairly and that the process not be infected with prejudice based on race. I signed the Racial Justice Act into law two years ago because it ensured that racial prejudice would not taint the application of the death penalty.”

“I am vetoing Senate Bill 9 for the same reason that I signed the Racial Justice Act two years ago: it is simply unacceptable for racial prejudice to play a role in the imposition of the death penalty in North Carolina.”

“Finally, it is important to be clear that the Racial Justice Act does not allow anyone to be released from prison or seek parole. Both my own legal counsel and legal experts from across the State have assured me that even if an inmate succeeds on a claim under the Racial Justice Act, his sole remedy is life in prison without the possibility of parole -- and even that would only occur if a judge first finds that racial discrimination played a significant role in the application of the death penalty.

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