

Table 2.55

Reported reasons for favoring the death penalty for persons convicted of murder

United States, 1991, 2000, 2001, and 2003

Question: "Why do you favor the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?"

Reason for favoring	1991	2000	2001	2003
An eye for an eye/they took a life/fits the crime	40%	40%	48%	37%
Save taxpayers money/cost associated with prison	12	12	20	11
Deterrent for potential crimes/set an example	8	8	10	11
Depends on the type of crime they commit	6	6	6	4
Fair punishment	6	6	1	3
They deserve it	5	5	6	13
They will repeat their crime/keep them from repeating it	4	4	6	7
Biblical reasons	3	3	3	5
Serve justice	2	3	1	4
Don't believe they can be rehabilitated	1	1	2	2
If there's no doubt the person committed the crime	NA	NA	2	3
Would help/benefit families of victims	NA	NA	1	2
Support/believe in death penalty	NA	NA	6	2
Life sentences don't always mean life in prison	NA	NA	2	1
Relieves prison overcrowding	NA	NA	2	1
Other	10	10	3	4
No opinion	3	3	1	2

Note: See Note, [table 2.51](#). This question was asked only of the respondents who answered "yes, in favor" to the question presented in [table 2.51](#). Percents may add to more than 100 because up to two responses were recorded from each respondent. For a discussion of public opinion survey sampling procedures, see [Appendix 5](#).

Source: The Gallup Organization, Inc., *The Gallup Poll* [Online]. Available: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/tb/religvalue/20030603c.asp> [June 10, 2003]. Table adapted by SOURCEBOOK staff. Reprinted by permission.