



## INDIANA PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS COUNCIL

302 W. Washington Street, Room E-205

Indianapolis, IN 46204-2767

[www.in.gov/ipac](http://www.in.gov/ipac)

Phone: (317) 232-1836

Fax: (317) 233-3599

CONTACT: Connie S. Smith  
Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council  
[Cosmith1@ipac.in.gov](mailto:Cosmith1@ipac.in.gov)  
317-232-1836

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Indiana Prosecutor: Mental Health Review at the Forefront of Indiana Death Penalty System**

INDIANAPOLIS (October 11, 2017) – Boone County Prosecutor Todd J. Meyer told a Legislative Study Committee today that mental health of the defendant is in the forefront of Indiana’s death penalty process and that current death penalty statutes are sufficient. The committee is considering the issue of serious mental illness and the death penalty.

“Our system works very well,” Prosecutor Meyer said. “It works the way you all have intended. The death penalty is used sparingly and is reserved for the worst of the worst offenders. Our capital litigation statute contains mitigators that protect someone from being executed who has a mental illness.” He added that every death penalty case in Indiana involves a rigorous determination of the mental health of the defendant.



**Prosecutor Todd J. Meyer**

Meyer said that legislation proposed last year that specifically prohibited the imposition of the death penalty in a defendant found to be seriously mentally ill was “a solution in search of a problem.” He said that death penalty and life without parole are part of the same statute and changes to the death penalty portion of the statute would also complicate the life without parole statutes.

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