

Americans Split on Death Penalty vs. Life Imprisonment With No Possibility of Parole

Gallup from time to time asks a separate question on the death penalty that provides respondents with the explicit alternative of "life imprisonment, with absolutely no possibility of parole." Given this choice, the public this year splits roughly evenly, with 49% saying the death penalty is the better penalty for murder, while 46% opt for life imprisonment. This split is roughly the same as in 2006, when this question was last asked. However, prior to 2000, support generally tilted more strongly toward the death penalty option.

If you could choose between the following two approaches, which do you think is the better penalty for murder?

■ % The death penalty ■ % Life imprisonment, with absolutely no possibility of parole
■ % No opinion

