The Death Penalty Information Center’s 2020 Year-End Report was released on December 16, 2020 and received extensive coverage in hundreds of print, online, television, and radio news outlets across the United States and around the world.

The year-end report acknowledged that the deep decline in death sentences and state executions was unquestionably a by-product of the pandemic, but even before the pandemic struck, the nation was on pace for the sixth straight year of near-record low sentences and executions. 2020 — a year unlike any other — featured the combination of court shutdowns from the worst pandemic in more than a century, a national reawakening on racial justice issues, and an unprecedented execution spree by the federal government. Even so, coverage of the year-end report noted that executions and death sentences in the United States fell to historic lows and that the federal government’s decision to restart executions in the middle of a pandemic after a 17-year hiatus was historically aberrant and completely out-of-step with today’s state death-penalty practices.

An Associated Press story that was carried by over 150 outlets noted that “President Donald Trump oversaw a full-throttle resumption of federal executions this year after a 17-year pause, carrying out 10 executions even as backing for capital punishment waned” and that 2020’s execution total was higher “than any other presidency since the 1800s”— a message that DPIC Executive Director Robert Dunham pushed consistently in interviews. Robert was quoted in the Associated Press’s article: “We have never seen it before. We never expected to see it. And it may be a long time before we ever see it happen again.”

Robert told the New York Times that “[a]t the time that almost every state was making the safety of its citizens a higher priority than executing prisoners, the federal government decided that it was more important for it to carry out a rash of executions without complete judicial review of those cases in circumstances that placed the public health at risk.”

Robert was featured on NPR several times, including in news stories and as a guest on 1A and Here and Now, which are distributed by 360 and 475 radio stations across the United States, respectively. During his Here and Now interview, he said that “[w]e’ve seen an unparalleled politicization of the Justice Department and the death penalty is part of that. After no one had executed anyone in 17 years, this administration has scheduled more executions for a shorter period of time than at any time in either the 20th or 21st centuries.”

Robert also offered extensive interviews to reporters working locally and in specialty outlets, many of whom focused on the geographic narrowing of the death penalty and its discriminatory use against people of color. In addition, multiple outlets quoted DPIC Senior Director of Research and Special Projects Ngozi Ndulue’s statement from the press release: “Racism has always infected the use of the death penalty and this year is no exception. The death penalty — as the most severe punishment — must be part of the efforts to address racism in the criminal legal system as a whole.”

A selection of notable coverage follows. Click on the headline to access each source.
* Indicates stories that included an interview with Executive Director Robert Dunham or Senior Director of Research Ngozi Ndulue  
** Uses a statement from DPIC’s press release

## PRINT & ONLINE MEDIA COVERAGE

### TOP TIER PRINT, NEWS SERVICES & ONLINE MEDIA (in alphabetical order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC News</td>
<td>Federal government in 2020 executed more prisoners than all 50 states: Death penalty research group**</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associated Press</td>
<td>Report: Federal execution numbers top states’ for 1st time*</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Above story carried by Bloomberg News, Boston Globe, CBS News, Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, Miami Herald, Washington Post, and over 150 other local media outlets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Associated Press</td>
<td>Texas had fewest executions since 1996 due to pandemic*</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Above story carried by the Austin American Statesman, Click2Texas, and other local media outlets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bloomberg Law</td>
<td>Executions Fall to Near 30-Year Low Despite Federal Resumption</td>
<td>Dec. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>The US government has executed 10 people this year – the most since 1986*</td>
<td>Dec. 17</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Above story carried by numerous local news outlets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Hill</td>
<td>Federal government executed more prisoners in 2020 than all states combined: research*</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Guardian</td>
<td>Trump administration has executed more Americans than all states combined, report finds**</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>NBC News</td>
<td>Death penalty at historic lows despite federal resumption of capital punishment</td>
<td>Dec. 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newsweek</td>
<td>Death Sentences Dropped to Historic Lows As Trump Admin Ramped Up FederalExecutions: Report**</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Times</td>
<td>Number of Executions in U.S. Falls Despite Push by Trump Administration*</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Above story carried by numerous local media outlets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Time Magazine</td>
<td>In a Year Marked By Death, the Trump Administration Cements a Legacy of Unprecedented Executions*</td>
<td>Dec. 30</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Above story carried by Yahoo! News and various local outlets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>United Press International</td>
<td>U.S. executions in 2020 fewest in nearly 3 decades despite federal 'spree'*</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>USA Today</td>
<td>Even as COVID-19 slows justice system, federal executions outnumber all states combined for the first time</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Above story carried by Yahoo! News and various local outlets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wall Street Journal</td>
<td>U.S. Executions Fall to 29-Year Low*</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington Post</td>
<td>Despite recent federal flurry, number of U.S. executions is lowest since 1991*</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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EDITORIALS AND OP-EDS (in alphabetical order)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allentown Morning Call (PA)</td>
<td>Your View: Why Pennsylvania should abolish the death penalty</td>
<td>Jan. 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baker City Herald (OR)</td>
<td>Letter to the Editor for Dec. 22, 2020</td>
<td>Dec. 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Insider</td>
<td>Trump is ending his term with a spree of executions, once again revealing his appetite for cruelty**</td>
<td>Dec. 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Oregonian (OR)</td>
<td>Letter: Trump’s unconscionable use of federal death penalty</td>
<td>Dec. 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Times</td>
<td>Opinion: Amid COVID closures, executions in 2020 dropped to lowest level in 30 years</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miami Herald</td>
<td>Our Latino community should work to end the death penalty</td>
<td>Opinion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newsmax</td>
<td>2020 Death Penalty Tally Highlights a Corrupt, Inept System</td>
<td>Dec. 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>PennLive (PA)</td>
<td>It’s time for the death penalty to die</td>
<td>PennLive letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuters Column</td>
<td>11th-hour executions cement Trump’s legacy*</td>
<td>Dec. 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>The St. Louis American (MO)</td>
<td>The death penalty is racially biased, hypocritical and inhumane</td>
<td>Dec. 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vox</td>
<td>The decline and fall of the American death penalty</td>
<td>Dec. 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Washington Post</td>
<td>The death penalty lost more ground in 2020 — except in the Trump administration</td>
<td>Dec. 31</td>
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LOCAL AND REGIONAL COVERAGE (in alphabetical order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dayton Daily News (OH)</td>
<td>Capital punishment declines nationwide, report shows</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greensboro News &amp; Record (NC)</td>
<td>Death sentences and executions are at historic lows in North Carolina and the rest of the country, new report says*</td>
<td>Dec. 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Newburgh Gazette (IL)</td>
<td>Federal Executions And The Trump Administration: 1A**</td>
<td>Dec. 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio Capital Journal (OH)</td>
<td>Death sentences, executions continue to fade in 2020</td>
<td>Dec. 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania Capital-Star (PA)</td>
<td>Five things the Legislature can do to make Pennsylvanians’ lives measurably better in 2021</td>
<td>Dec. 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania Capital-Star (PA)</td>
<td>As executions slowed during pandemic, death penalty opposition continued to grow</td>
<td>Wednesday Morning Coffee**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SOURCE** | **TITLE** | **DATE**
---|---|---
Winston-Salem Journal (NC) | *Death sentences and executions are at historic lows in North Carolina and the rest of the country, new report says* | Dec. 22

**SPECIALTY COVERAGE (in alphabetical order)**

**SOURCE** | **TITLE** | **DATE**
---|---|---
ABA Journal | *For first time in history, federal government carried out more civilian executions than all 50 states* | Dec. 17
America Magazine | *In 2020, the Trump administration executed more prisoners than all states combined*** | Dec. 16
The American Prospect: Ideas, Politics & Power | *How Biden Can End Trump’s Macabre Execution Spree* | Dec. 22
Between the Lines | *In a Cruel Last Act, Trump Orders Record-Breaking Wave of Federal Executions* | Dec. 23
Bloomberg Government | *What to Know in Washington: Leaders Make Progress on Aid Deal* | Dec. 16
The Catholic Universe | *Death penalty hits historic low in US ‘despite federal execution spree’*** | Dec. 28
The Crime Report | *State Executions Dropped to Historic Low in 2020, as Feds Defy Trend** | Dec. 16
Daily Caller | *Firing Squads, The Electric Chair And A Drug Cocktail: The State Of The Death Penalty In America* | Dec. 23
Fast Company | *The Trump administration plans to execute more people during a lame-duck period than any other president* | Dec. 22
The Intercept | *How the Pandemic Exposed the Failures of Capital Punishment* | Jan. 3
Jurist | *States move away from death penalty as federal government ramps up executions: report* | Dec. 16
Law360 | *Federal Death Row Executions Raise Red Flags For Advocates* | Dec. 20
The Marshall Project | *Opening Statement—December 16* | Dec. 16
The Progressive | *Their Right to Take Your Life: A History of the US Death Penalty* | Dec. 22
Catholic News Service | *Death penalty hits historic low in U.S. ‘despite federal execution spree,’ says report** | Dec. 17

*Above story carried by the Tablet*

The New York Beacon | *Donald Trump broke a new morbid record** | Dec. 17
The Washington Times | *Federal government executed more inmates in 2020 than all states combined, says watchdog group*** | Dec. 16
Route Fifty | *Death Penalty Used Sparingly by States in 2020 Amid Pandemic* | Dec. 16
Salon | *As Trump continues killing spree, Ayanna Pressley leads call for abolition of death penalty* | Dec. 19
## TELEVISION AND RADIO

### NATIONAL TELEVISION & RADIO OUTLETS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Associated Press Radio</td>
<td>No title (<a href="#">link here</a>)</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBS Radio</td>
<td>No title (<a href="#">link here</a>)</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fox News Radio</td>
<td>No title (<a href="#">link here</a>)</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>KCRW</td>
<td>Press Play with Madeleine Brand: This year, US government executes the most people in more than a century.*</td>
<td>Dec. 21</td>
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</table>
### INTERNATIONAL COVERAGE (in alphabetical order)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alalam TV (Iran)</td>
<td>Trump reinstated the executions after 17 years of stopping them</td>
<td>Dec. 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agence France-Presse</td>
<td>US executions reached 29-year low in 2020: monitor**</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Above story carried by Yahoo! News</td>
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<td>Bahia Lighthouse (Portuguese)</td>
<td>Sum of execution of death row in the Trump administration in 2020 is greater than the total of all states</td>
<td>Dec. 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Click Lancashire Independent News (UK)</td>
<td>U.S. executions reached 29-year low in 2020, says monitor</td>
<td>Dec. 18</td>
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<td>CT Want (China)</td>
<td>Most in 124 years! Trump slays 10 death row prisoners since July</td>
<td>Dec. 18</td>
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<td>Head Topics (Mexico)</td>
<td>Trump maintains the threatening tone; Biden gets vaccinated and prepares government</td>
<td>Dec. 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>HuffPost Greece</td>
<td>USA: Trump has ordered more executions than all states in 2020 as a whole</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>La Verdad (Venezuela)</td>
<td>Trump administration had the highest rate of executions in US history</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lenta (Russia)</td>
<td>Trump administration convicted of &quot;exceptional bloodlust&quot;**</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Malaysian Insight</td>
<td>US executions reached 29-year low in 2020, says monitor</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>News 24 (France)</td>
<td>Even as COVID-19 slows justice system, federal executions outnumber all states combined for the first time</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nius Diario (Spanish)</td>
<td>The Trump Administration has authorized more executions of prisoners than all states in 2020</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reader.gr (Greece)</td>
<td>US: Record of executions of prisoners by the Trump administration</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOURCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>RP Online (Germany)</td>
<td>Few executions in 2020 in the US</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>RTL (Luxembourg)</td>
<td>Number of executions as low as 29 years no more</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Svenska Dagbladet (Sweden)</td>
<td>More death sentences carried out by the US state</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zazoom (Italy)</td>
<td>Trump's latest sad &quot;record&quot; concerns the number of death sentences</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
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