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Lawmakers Could Debate Death Penalty In Kansas

Kansas lawmakers expect a lively debate next year on whether to revisit the state's penalties for murder.

Some are pushing for tougher prison sentences, while others are seeking to repeal capital punishment following an unsuccessful effort this past session.

The issue surfaced this month as legislators met briefly to fix a constitutional flaw in the Hard 50 sentencing procedure for offenders convicted of premeditated first-degree murder.

The state took the action following a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that said juries, not judges, must consider whether the facts in a case should prompt mandatory minimum sentences.

Senate Vice President Jeff King says the special session brought into focus the need for policymakers to re-examine whether the state's murder sentences are adequate when compared to other crimes.

Associated Press