



**HALTsolitary**  
NEW YORK CAMPAIGN FOR ALTERNATIVES TO ISOLATED CONFINEMENT

## KEY TALKING POINTS

### HUMANE ALTERNATIVES TO LONG TERM (HALT) SOLITARY CONFINEMENT ACT

S1623 / A2500 IN NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE; 2018 PASSED ASSEMBLY, & CURRENTLY 30 SENATE CO-SPONSORS

**MAIN MESSAGE: HALT WOULD END THE TORTURE OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT FOR ALL PEOPLE AND CREATE MORE HUMANE AND EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVES**

**Solitary Confinement is Torture and NY must end this practice today**

- **Thousands of people** still in solitary each day, disproportionately Black and Latinx people.
- 22-24 hours a day in cell with no meaningful human contact or programs; rec alone in cage.
- People continue to spend **months, years, decades in solitary** (upwards of over 30+ years)
- People can be sent to solitary for almost any reason – most non-violent conduct (ie disobeying order)
- **This is torture**- it causes **devastating harm**. Makes prisons and communities **less safe**.
- Far too many minds and lives have been and continue to be lost. 30% suicides in solitary. Has to stop.

**The HALT Solitary Confinement Act is THE critical bill right now to end the torture of solitary in NY**

- **Ends solitary beyond 15 days** for all people in line with the UN's Mandela Rules and what is defined internationally as *torture*. Colorado has implemented 15 day limit; dropped from 1,500 to 18 in solitary.
- Creates **more humane, effective alternatives**. People can be separated in safe secure units but not isolation/torture. Meaningful human contact/programs to address underlying reasons, 7 hours/day. Program-based alternatives work/safer/reduce violence: Merle Cooper NY, RSVP San Fran jails.
- **Bans certain groups** of people from any time in solitary – young people, people with MH needs
- **Restricts the criteria** for who can be separated to the most serious conduct.
- **Enhances processes** (representation), staff **training, reporting, and oversight**.

**The Governor's proposed Article VII bill has severe limitations; NY must pass HALT**

- **Still allow indefinite solitary** by other name (only for disciplinary SHU; not keeplock, admin seg, PC)
- **Leave groups of people behind** from ban, including young people (18-21), people with MH needs
- **No restricted criteria** so still can be sent to solitary for almost any alleged minor rule violation

- **Fails to mandate real effective alternatives**- only out 5 hrs/4 days a week (HALT: 7 hrs/7days) and not congregate programming (could be alone in another rec cage)
- Takes three years to get to a **limit of 90 days, then 60 days, then 30 days. Beyond 15 is torture.**
- People could be **warehoused in the alternative units indefinitely.**
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**Beyond solitary, NY must fundamentally transform the entire system**

- Solitary: result/cause of entire system rooted in racism that manifests as extreme punishment paradigm
- Fundamentally transform entire system to focus on healing, empowerment, repair, real safety. Priorities:
  - o **Parole:** Elder parole (parole eligible-age 55 after 15 years), Fair & timely parole (Board focus on current risk & rehabilitation), and Fully staffed board with people who believe in rehabilitation
  - o **Higher education** (TAP restoration) and **Voting Rights** for people in prison and on parole
  - o **Pre-trial** (bail, speedy trial, discovery) and **marijuana** justice (legalization, expungement, funds)

Family visiting **bus program, 7 day visits, house people closer** to their children **DV Survivors Justice Act**, sentencing reform, **reparations**, racial and ethnic impact statements **close prisons** (starting w most notoriously abusive-Clinton, Attica, Great Meadow, Southport) to stop atrocities there & send clear message: rampant racist brutality across system must end.