Solitary Confinement briefing

Solitary confinement for more than fifteen days is considered torture by the United Nations and a violation of basic human rights. The primary task of prisons is to foster safer communities not be institutions of state sanctioned abuse. Despite the moral and factual evidence against solitary confinement, hundreds of Wisconsin inmates are routinely isolated in closed cells for 22-24 hours a day. They are virtually free of human contact, for periods of time ranging from days to decades. It is called "segregation" or "administrative confinement," or more recently "restrictive housing."

Calling solitary confinement by a different name (i.e. Administrative Confinement, or Segregation, or Restrictive Housing) does not diminish the cruelty or future consequences. Rick Raemisch, former Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, has said that, "By placing a difficult offender in isolation you have not solved the problem — only delayed or more likely exacerbated it, not only for the prison, but ultimately for the public.*"*

In recent years, Wisconsin has decreased the number of people in Solitary Confinement. The reduction, however, was very uneven – some institutions reduced it dramatically; others hardly at all. And, there are still, on an average day, 900-1,000 people in Solitary Confinement.

Actions to be taken
:

- Instruct the new DOC Secretary to end the placement of mentally ill prisoners in solitary confinement.
- Immediately end the use of long term "Administrative Confinement."
- Order the Department of Corrections to document how many days inmates in Wisconsin prisons spend in all levels of segregation and order them to immediately reduce by fifty percent the number of days inmates in Wisconsin Prisons spend in segregation within a year.
- Immediately begin a process that will end all use of solitary confinement for more than 15 consecutive days in Wisconsin prisons.

November, 2018