



THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

NEW YORK CAMPAIGN FOR ALTERNATIVES TO ISOLATED CONFINEMENT

For Planning Purposes: (Tomorrow) Wednesday, December 23, 2015 @ 5 – 8:30 PM [see below]

Contact: Jared Chausow – (650) 814-0565, jchausow@gmail.com

CAIC, NYS Legislators Demand End to Torture of Solitary Confinement; Members Hold Parallel Actions in Harlem, Long Island, Ithaca, Poughkeepsie and Beacon in Monthly Series

More than 4,500 New Yorkers in Solitary Can't Call Home, Hold Love Ones, Receive Gifts through the Holidays

Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement (CAIC) Will Call on Governor Cuomo, State Legislators to Support HALT Solitary Confinement Act and End Torture of Isolated Persons in New York State Jails and Prisons

Actions Are Held on the 23rd of Every Month, to Recognize the 23 Hours Each Day That a Person in Solitary Confinement is Isolated

WHAT: The night before Christmas Eve, the Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement (CAIC) will hold rallies in New York, Beacon, Long Island, Poughkeepsie and Ithaca to highlight the torture suffered by thousands of New Yorkers subjected to solitary confinement, calling on Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature to pass the **Humane Alternatives to Long Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Act (A. 4401 / S. 2659)**. New Yorkers in solitary confinement are not allowed phone calls, visits or packages, including during the holidays. This action is the seventh in a monthly series of actions against the torture of solitary confinement. This month, actions will include speakouts, candle lighting ceremonies, petitioning, and more around the state.

WHO: NYS Senator Bill Perkins, NYS Assembly Member Dan Quart and other legislators, Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement (CAIC) members, including individuals with personal experience of solitary confinement, Amnesty International group 73, Beacon Prison Action, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock's (UCCSR) Social Justice Committee, and concerned community members.

WHEN: Wednesday, December 23 at various times between 5 and 8:30 PM [see below].

WHERE: **New York City:** At 6 PM, CAIC members, NYS Senator Bill Perkins, NYS Assembly Member Dan Quart, and others will hold a rally and speakout on 125 Street at Park Avenue, under the elevated Metro North tracks in Harlem (by the entrance to the station).
Poughkeepsie: Throughout the afternoon, CAIC members will distribute leaflets and hold signs to raise awareness at the Poughkeepsie ‘Walkway Over the Hudson.’
Beacon: At 5:30 PM, CAIC partner Beacon Prison Action will be flyering and petitioning at the Beacon Train Station (1 Ferry Plaza Beacon, NY 12508).
Ithaca: From 5 to 5:30 PM, in partnership with Amnesty International group 73, CAIC members will petition and hold signs outside the Tompkins County Public Library (101 E. Greene Street).
Long Island: At 7 PM, Members of the UUCSR Social Justice Committee and members of the public will light 23 candles and read 23 names in the Worship Room of UUCSR at 48 Shelter Rock Road. Special guest Al Simon will share his experience of incarceration and solitary confinement and discuss his current work as an advocate for change.

BACKGROUND:

According to [the Association of State Correctional Administrators](#), the percentage of New York’s state prison population that is in solitary is approximately **double the national average**. In New York State, individuals are regularly held in solitary confinement for periods of time that amount to torture. While the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture has denounced solitary confinement exceeding 15 days, NYS places no limit on the total time a person may spend in isolation, and most people in New York’s isolation cells spend months or years there, and some have spent decades. Individuals in solitary confinement spend 23 hours or more a day locked in a cell the size of an elevator. The sensory deprivation, lack of normal interaction, and extreme idleness of solitary can lead to intense suffering and severe psychological and physical damage. Despite this, on any given day, as many as 5,000 men, women, and children are locked in isolated confinement in New York’s prisons and jails. These individuals are disproportionately people of color, young people, and people with mental illness.

CAIC is calling for NYS Legislators and Governor Cuomo to pass the **HALT Solitary Confinement Act (A. 4401 / S. 2659)**, which would end the torture of solitary confinement and create more humane and effective rehabilitative alternatives. The bill would create programming to address incarcerated persons’ underlying needs and causes of behavior, cap isolated confinement at 15 consecutive days and 20 days total in a 60 day period, protect vulnerable populations from even one day of solitary, enhance due process and other procedural protections, and require greater corrections staff training and independent oversight of corrections disciplinary processes.

ABOUT CAIC:

The Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement (CAIC) brings together advocates, formerly incarcerated persons, family members of currently incarcerated people, concerned community members, lawyers, and individuals in the human rights, health, and faith communities throughout New York State. Through statewide actions, petitioning legislators to support the HALT Solitary Confinement Act, and educating their communities about the torture of solitary confinement, CAIC members advocate for sweeping reform of New York’s use of solitary confinement and other forms of extreme isolation in state prisons and local jails. Learn more at www.nycaic.org.

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