

For Immediate Release...

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*****STATEMENT BY THE #HALTsolitary CAMPAIGN***
ON NYC MAYOR DE BLASIO'S
COMMITMENT TO END SOLITARY CONFINEMENT**

(New York, NY) — Today, the #HALTsolitary Campaign released the following statement on comments about solitary confinement made by New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio at his press conference this morning. Specifically, the Mayor claimed that New York City Department of Correction (DOC) will immediately end the use of solitary confinement for those with underlying medical conditions. Yet the City jail oversight body, the Board of Correction, already prohibits DOC from placing people with serious physical disabilities or conditions in solitary confinement, so this 'reform' is what DOC should have been doing already. He also said that the Board of Correction is forming a working group to find a path for eliminating solitary confinement.

“While we welcome Mayor de Blasio acknowledging the need to end solitary confinement in New York City jails, the time for working groups and discussions has long passed. Decades of research show that solitary is ineffective, dangerous, and, too often, deadly. The Mayor has the power to eliminate this torture immediately and the community provided him with a [detailed plan](#) for doing so last October. The Mayor should have announced today that the Board of Correction - which has purportedly been working on rules to restrict solitary confinement for three years - would be voting on proposed rules in line with the community plan to fully eliminate solitary at its upcoming July 14 meeting. Layleen Polanco died in solitary over one year ago. Kalief Browder died because of solitary confinement over five years ago. Bradley Ballard died in solitary confinement nearly seven years ago. Jason Echeverria died in solitary confinement nearly eight years ago. Carina Montes died in solitary over 17 years ago. Eliminate this practice now.”

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Led by survivors of solitary confinement and family members of those who have died in solitary, the [#HALTsolitary Campaign](#) fights to abolish this torture. At the state level, the campaign has worked to pass the [Humane Alternatives to Long-Term \(HALT\) Solitary Confinement Act](#) in New York State since 2013. In New York City, the Campaign demands implementation of the [Blueprint to End Solitary](#), along with [detailed rules](#) for how to implement it, motivated in part by Layleen's passing. June 7 marked the one year anniversary of Layleen's tragic passing. While there was a huge outcry by the community and many political leaders - including [New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams](#), [New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson](#), and various [City Council Members](#) and [State Legislators](#) - have called for an end to solitary confinement following her death, still one year later no action has been taken at the City or State level to end solitary confinement.

The [#HALTsolitary Campaign](#) is concerned that a working group is unnecessary and a delay tactic. We are also concerned that, of the four members appointed by the Mayor to this working group, one is COBA, which has been fighting any limitations on the use of solitary confinement for years. Similarly concerning, another member is the DOC Commissioner, who has long had the power to eliminate solitary and has failed to do so, and the Department even [falsely](#) claimed earlier this month that the city does not have solitary. The Board of Correction on its own should be moving forward with its rulemaking and should vote on rules to fully eliminate solitary confinement at its upcoming July 14 Board meeting.