**The #HALTsolitary campaign of NYCAIC released the following statement on February 12, 2018, following the Assembly majority's** [**introduction of a comprehensive criminal justice reform package**](http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/Press/files/20180212.php) **that includes the HALT Solitary Confinement Act:**

The Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement (CAIC) applauds Speaker Heastie and the New York Assembly for including the Humane Alternatives to Long Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Act, A.3080B/S.4784A as part of its Criminal Justice Reform package released today.

Solitary confinement is torture. Thousands of people, disproportionately Black and Brown people, remain in solitary in NY each day: 22 to 24 hours a day in a cell without any meaningful human contact or programs. People continue to spend months, years, and decades in solitary (30+ years) in NY. These conditions cause devastating physical, mental, and behavioral impacts. The entire United Nations, including the US, passed rules prohibiting solitary beyond 15 days for any person, because it otherwise would amount to torture. Colorado has implemented a 15-day limit in its prisons and reduced the number of people in solitary from 1,500 to 18. HALT would similarly include a 15-day limit on solitary, and would create more humane and effective alternatives. While Governor Cuomo has touted reforms to solitary, New York still has a higher percentage of people in solitary (5.8%) than the national average (4.4%) and much higher than states that have reformed solitary (less than 1% to 2%).

The HALT Solitary Confinement Act, A.3080B/S.4784A, is the only bill that will end the torture of solitary for all people and create more humane and effective alternatives. Over 180 organizations across New York State and over 100 NY legislators now support HALT. Without HALT, thousands of New Yorkers will continue to be subjected to the torture of solitary for months, years, and decades.

We are thus grateful that Speaker Heastie and the NY Assembly have prioritized HALT and look forward to the Assembly passing HALT, and for the NY Senate and Governor Cuomo to follow the Assembly’s lead. We also applaud Speaker Heastie and the Assembly for pushing for other urgent and necessary changes to the criminal justice system, including bills related to bail, speedy trial, discovery, reentry, and more. We look forward to partnering with the Assembly to make these and other priorities, such as parole reform, the law in New York State. It is finally time for New York to end the torture of solitary confinement, and undertake a fundamental transformation of the state’s criminal justice system as a whole, and we once again applaud the Speaker’s and the Assembly’s leadership toward those ends.