



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alessandra Biaggi

## SENATOR BIAGGI AND SENATE MAJORITY PASS THE ‘HALT’ SOLITARY CONFINEMENT ACT

ALESSANDRA BIAGGI March 19, 2021

**ALBANY, NY** – This week Senator Alessandra Biaggi and the Senate Democratic Majority passed the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement Act (HALT). This legislation ([S.2836](#)) limits the use of segregated confinement for all incarcerated persons to 15 days, implements alternative rehabilitative measures, including the creation of Residential Rehabilitation Units (RRU), expands the definition of segregated confinement, and eliminates the use of segregated confinement for vulnerable incarcerated populations. Additionally, this bill establishes guidelines for humane conditions in segregated confinement, outlines reporting requirements, and adds due process protections by prohibiting placement in segregated confinement prior to a disciplinary hearing by allowing access to counsel. The Nelson Mandela Rules adopted by the United Nations, define segregated confinement for more than 15 days as torture. HALT will bring New York in compliance with this international standard and save the State tens of millions of dollars over the next several years.

**State Senator Alessandra Biaggi (D-Bronx/Westchester) issued the following statement:**

“Solitary confinement is torture and inhumane. Isolating incarcerated New Yorkers has life-long consequences on their physical and emotional wellbeing — disproportionately impacting Black incarcerated people who represent 60% of New Yorkers held in solitary

confinement units. The HALT Solitary Confinement Act will end the cycle of trauma we subject incarcerated people to, and heal our communities through therapeutic and rehabilitative solutions instead. As a co-sponsor of HALT, I extend my gratitude to the solitary survivors, their loved ones, and formerly incarcerated New Yorkers who have advocated for this legislation for years. Passing the HALT Solitary Confinement Act is a vital step in the fight for restorative and racial justice.”

**The Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement Act (HALT) will:**

- Limit the use of segregated confinement in state prisons and county jails and implement alternative rehabilitative measures, including the creation of Residential Rehabilitation Units (RRU).
- Restrict the use of segregated confinement for all incarcerated persons for up to 15 days.
- Expand the definition of segregated confinement to include any form of cell confinement where an individual is held for more than 17 hours a day.
- Mandate additional out-of-cell time and rehabilitative programming for individuals diverted to rehabilitative units after the 15-day limit has been reached.
- Prohibit segregated confinement for special populations for any period of time.
  - Special populations are:
    - Individuals age 21 or younger,
    - Individuals age 55 and over,
    - Individuals with a disability,
    - And individuals who are pregnant, up to eight weeks postpartum, or caring for children in a facility.

- Prohibit the denial of services, treatment, or basic needs such as clothing, food, and bedding while an individual is held in segregated confinement.
- Mandate that staff must undergo 37 hours and 30 minutes initial training prior to assignment on segregated confinement units and 21 additional hours, annually, after assignment.
- Add due process protections by prohibiting placement in segregated confinement prior to a disciplinary hearing and by allowing access to counsel.
- Require DOCCS to publish monthly reports on its website with semi-annual and annual cumulative reports of the total number of people in segregated confinement.

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