

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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by [Hallie Grossman](#) | June 7, 2015

The following roundup features noteworthy news, reports and opinions on solitary confinement from the past week that have not been covered in other Solitary Watch posts.

[A New Jersey bill](#) hopes to reduce the limits on solitary confinement to no more than two days in a row for 15-year-olds, no more than three for those between 16 and 17, and no more than five for those 18 and over. The bill also hopes to increase the age of juveniles who can be waived into the adult system from 14 to 15.

The California Senate [passed a bill](#) limiting the use of solitary confinement in juvenile correctional facilities to only when an individual poses an immediate and substantial risk of harming others or threatening the security of the facility.

Amanda Smith, a formerly incarcerated woman from Pennsylvania, is [suing Snyder County and its jail officials](#) for holding her in solitary confinement for three days without her prescribed medication. Smith claims it was due to her being a transgender woman, while the court denies treating her differently than other woman held in the jail.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, [there is no record](#) of the number of people in solitary confinement at any given time, the number of people killed by police, or prison assaults. These are not mandatory, while keeping records of sexual assault numbers is required as of the [2003 Prison Rape Elimination Act](#).

Congressman Cedric Richmond from New Orleans [has once again proposed legislation](#) that would limit solitary confinement. A Solitary Confinement Study and Reform Commission would be created to study the mental, physical, and economic effects of solitary confinement and make suggestions for reform. Following their report, the Attorney General would be required to publish new solitary confinement rules, and noncompliant states would lose 15 percent of federal prison grants.

U.S. District Judge Leonie M. Brinkema is [urging the federal court to reassess](#) whether it is constitutional to automatically place people on death row in solitary confinement. According to the *Washington Post*, individuals held on death row often spend a decade or more in prison before they are executed, have their sentences changed, or are exonerated.

Hallie Grossman was a research and reporting intern for Solitary Watch and now works in communications at DKC in New York.

Accurate information and authentic storytelling can serve as powerful antidotes to ignorance and injustice. We have helped generate public awareness, mainstream media attention, and informed policymaking on what was once an invisible domestic human rights crisis.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 5, 2022

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