

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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by [Aviva Stahl](#) | July 13, 2014



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.

California Families Against Solitary Confinement (CFASC) has [filed a lawsuit](#) against the states corrections officials, demanding disclosure of information regarding solitary confinement policies under the California Public Records Act. In [San Bernardino](#) and elsewhere across the state, protesters came out to honor the one-year anniversary of the California prison hunger strikes and call for change.

Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) [have introduced a bill into Congress](#) that would prohibit juvenile facilities from using solitary confinement unless the youngster posed a serious and immediate risk of physical harm to themselves or others. The [REDEEM Act](#), or Record Expungement Designed to Enhance Employment Act, would also require courts to expunge or seal criminal records for a broad scope of juvenile offenses and provide financial incentives to states that set 18 as the age of adult jurisdiction.

A Tennessee man [has filed a lawsuit](#) against Sierra County in New Mexico after he was denied psychiatric medication and left to decompensate in a filthy solitary confinement cell for 18 days. Michael Faziana, who had been arrested on misdemeanor charges, is seeking punitive and compensatory damages.

New York Citys Board of Corrections asserted that the newly appointed Commissioner [violated the law](#) by placing as many as 47 inmates with mental illness into solitary confinement without first getting clearance from qualified clinicians. The board, which provides independent oversight of the citys jails, disputes Commissioner Pontes assertion that the transfer was necessary to control rising violence on the inside.

A Wisconsin coalition of churches has [launched a campaign](#) to reform practices within the states Department of Corrections, including ending solitary confinement.

The family of an Army veteran who died in solitary confinement in a Florida jail in July 2012 [is suing](#) the Broward County Sheriffs Office as well as the jails private health care provider. Raleigh Priester, 52, who had long struggled with schizophrenia, was found unresponsive in his cell in May 2012 after spending several months in isolation. Priester was released back to jail staff with specific instructions for his ongoing care, and died just a few weeks later weighing just 120 pounds despite being over six feet tall.

A [lawsuit filed this week](#) against the Florida Department of Corrections (DOC) alleges that guards at Franklin Correctional Institution gassed to death an individual in solitary confinement, then covered up the incident with the help of high-level staff and medical providers. The whistle-blower complaint alleges that 27-year-old Randall Jordan-Aparo was begging jail staff for medical attention when he was transferred into isolation. [The Miami Herald](#) published an editorial calling for a full investigation into the DOCs practices.

Two years after Brandon Palakovic hung himself in solitary confinement in a Pennsylvania prison, his parents have [filed a lawsuit](#) against states Corrections Secretary and several facility staff. Palakovic, who was 23 when he died at Cresson, had an extensive history of mental illness. In May 2013, Deputy Assistant Attorney General Roy L. Austin wrote that the facility often permitted its prisoners with serious mental illness to simply languish in solitary confinement for months or years on end under harsh conditions in violation of the

Constitution.

Aviva Stahl is a Brooklyn-based reporter who writes about science/health at the intersection of mass incarceration, national security, and trans rights. Shes written for the New York Times, Wired, BuzzFeed News, Solitary Watch, and other outlets. Find her [@stahlidarity](#) and at [stahlidarity.com](#).

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 [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 26, 2022

by [Caitlin Konya](#)

October 19, 2022

by [Mirilla Zhu](#)

October 12, 2022

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Designate one day a year as Solitary Day for all inmates; a day when all inmates will fast and decline to work.

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