

National Religious Campaign Against Torture

Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

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Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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National Religious Campaign Against Torture Applauds New York for Ending Solitary Confinement in State Prisons and Jails

WASHINGTON - The National Religious Campaign Against Torture applauds Governor Andrew Cuomo for signing the HALT Solitary Confinement Act in New York last night, effectively ending the torture of long-term solitary confinement in the state. The legislation is set to be implemented in March of 2022, and applies to all New York prisons and jails. It will impact tens of thousands of people a year who are imprisoned and land in isolation, often for longer than the 15 day limit set by the new law, and sometimes for months, years and even decades.

The eight-year effort to pass the bill, led by the broad-based New York Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement, was finally won as progressive legislators used their supermajorities in the Senate and Assembly to ensure passage.

This is a huge moral victory for the people of New York especially for anyone who has ever been held in solitary confinement. The success of the campaign in winning this legislation will inspire activists across the country who are right now pushing legislation to end solitary in their state prisons and jails, said Rev. Ron Stief, Executive Director of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture.

Mr. Victor Pate, NRCAT staff member and NY Statewide Organizer with the #HALTsolitary Campaign, recounts his experience of two years in solitary confinement during 15 years in prison: It didnt take me long to start seeing things that werent in my cell, to start having a conversation with nobody there. You never get over that. Further Pate said, The leadership of solitary survivors, with support from many including faith communities across New York state, got us to this important victory towards ending the torture of long-term solitary confinement in the state. We will now be watching implementation of the new law."

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture remains committed to organize alongside the faith and community advocates who will eventually end the torture of long-term solitary confinement state by state through legislation, administrative action, and decarceration. For more information on these active campaigns around the country, contact Johnny Perez, Director, NRCAT U.S. Prisons Program, at jperez@nrcat.org.

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