

# National Religious Campaign Against Torture

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

<http://www.nrcat.org/about/nrcat-press-releases/1246-blueprint-060721>

## Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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### **People of Faith Join in Releasing First-Ever Federal Blueprint for Ending Solitary Confinement**

*Blueprint Provides Specifics for How the President and Congress Can Make Good on Biden's Promise to Stop This Torturous Practice*

WASHINGTON, DC - The Federal Anti-Solitary Taskforce (FAST), a coalition of which the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) is a member, released the first-ever [Blueprint for Ending Solitary Confinement by the Federal Government](#) today. This document outlines how the United States government can use executive, administrative, and legislative action to end the torture of solitary confinement in federal custody, including in Bureau of Prisons facilities, U.S. Marshals Service facilities, and immigration detention.

There are a growing number of states that have taken a stand against the torture of solitary confinement, said **Johnny Perez, director of the U.S. Prisons Program at the National Religious Campaign Against Torture and a survivor of solitary confinement**. It is time for the federal government to lead by ending the practice once and for all and incentivizing states to do so. We are hopeful the Biden-Harris administration will follow through with their campaign promise to end solitary by any name and in all forms.

Currently, more than [10,000 people](#) - representing nearly 8 percent of the total federal prison population - are in some form of solitary confinement in federal BOP facilities on any given day. This is a substantially higher percentage than the [national average](#) in state prison systems, and even higher than in the federal BOP a [decade ago](#), before reductions were made under the Obama administration.

"The national faith community has pledged to partner with the Biden-Harris Administration to fulfill its campaign promise to end solitary confinement, and our Blueprint lays out the roadmap to end this torture once and for all," said Rev. Ron Stief, Executive Director of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture. In reiterating its call for ending long-term solitary, NRCAT joined 30 national faith bodies and more than 150 organizations overall in sending a [letter to the Administration, "Ending the Practice of Solitary Confinement: Recommendations for Federal Reform](#).

Specifically, the released Blueprint calls for the U.S. government to:

In federal custody, as in state and local jurisdictions across the country, solitary and other forms of restrictive housing and practices are [disproportionately](#) inflicted on Black people, Latinx people, Indigenous people, and other people of color, as well as transgender and gender non-conforming people, people with mental health needs, and young people. Across the country, since the pandemic began, there has been a [500 percent increase](#) in the use of solitary confinement, with more than 300,000 people being held in these cruel and inhumane conditions since June 2020 in the federal and state systems.

President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris both committed to ending the practice of solitary confinement in their 2020 campaigns and policy platforms. These commitments were shared widely among other leading Democratic presidential candidates, including Sens. Elizabeth Warren, Bernie Sanders, and Cory Booker.

At the same time, states and localities across the country are restricting the use of solitary across partisan lines, and multiple local and state jurisdictions are moving toward fully ending solitary. In 2021, 70 pieces of legislation were filed across 32 states to end some aspect of solitary confinement in state prisons and jails.

The blueprint is online [here](#).

Additionally, the National Religious Campaign Against Torture joined more than 130 organizations in sending a letter, Ending the Practice of Solitary Confinement: Recommendations for Federal Reform to the Administration on June 3, 2021.

**About the Federal Anti-Solitary Taskforce (FAST):** Convened by leading nationwide experts on solitary, including the American Civil Liberties Union, Vera Institute of Justice, National Religious Campaign Against Torture, Unlock the Box Campaign, Center for Constitutional Rights, and the #HALTsolitary Campaign, the Federal Anti-Solitary Taskforce is working to fully end solitary confinement in federal prisons and detention facilities, and end solitary in states and localities as well. The Taskforce is comprised of civil rights, human rights, faith, and health organizations and leaders, including people who have survived solitary confinement, people who have had family members in solitary confinement, and their allies. Members of the Taskforce have been working to end solitary confinement across the country and have come together to push for an end to solitary confinement federally.

*The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) is a membership organization committed to ending U.S.-sponsored torture, and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. Since its formation in January 2006, more than 300 religious organizations have joined NRCAT, including representatives from the Catholic, evangelical Christian, mainline Protestant, Unitarian Universalist, Quaker, Orthodox Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Bahai, Buddhist, and Sikh communities. Members include national denominations and faith groups, regional organizations and local congregations.*

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