

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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by [Aviva Stahl](#) | February 22, 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.

The New York Times magazine published an article entitled [The Shame of Solitary Confinement](#), which focuses on what's happening in one Southern state. Solitary in theory, a punishment for the worst of the worst, inmates who pose an immediate threat to others has become a routine disciplinary tool, used in ways for which it was never intended. The good news is that this is beginning to change even, it turns out, in South Carolina.

South Carolina Department of Corrections Director Bryan Stirling announced that he has [ordered a cap](#) on the use of disciplinary detention. There will now be a 60-day maximum placement in disciplinary segregation, except for those believed to be a threat to others.

The UK's [Daily Mail](#) published an article about Anthony Graves, who spent twelve years in solitary confinement after being wrongfully convicted and sent to death row. He was released in 2010.

The debate within the American Institute of Architects (AIA) about whether to censure members who design solitary-confinement cells and death chambers was [covered by The New York Times](#). The AIA rejected a petition on the matter in December.

David Shapiro, a law professor at Northwestern, published an op-ed in [Crains Chicago Business](#) about the post 9/11 human rights violations that have occurred on American soil including the use of solitary confinement. The war on terror has driven a transformation of federal incarceration in less exotic locales like downstate Marion, Terre Haute, Ind., and New York.

The Montana state legislature introduced a [bill](#) that would ban the use of solitary confinement for some incarcerated individuals and restrict it for others. We have to be realistic about how to interact with human beings to ensure they remain human beings, said the Representative who introduced the bill. (Covered by the [Great Falls Tribune](#)).

A federal judge approved a [settlement](#) in a lawsuit filed against the Arizona Department of Corrections by the American Civil Liberties Union and Prison Law Office. Under the settlement, the DOC must provide specific minimum out-of-cell hours for those in maximum security settings, and also institute significant changes to health care on the inside. A bill to reform the use of solitary in Arizona successfully [passed out of](#) the House of Representatives Military Affairs and Public Safety Committee.

New Mexico [introduced a bill](#) to restrict isolated confinement in prisons. A bill was [also introduced](#) in Nebraska.

[WABC Eyewitness News](#) conducted an exclusive tour of the Enhanced Supervision Housing Unit, the new isolation unit set to open at Rikers next week. The unit has come under scrutiny from prison advocates for extending the use of solitary confinement at the jail complex.

Aviva Stahl is a Brooklyn-based reporter who writes about science/health at the intersection of mass incarceration, national security, and trans rights. She's 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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