

National Religious Campaign Against Torture

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

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Public Facing Advocacy Writing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 10, 2022

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National Faith Coalition Applauds Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont for Signing Legislation to End Long-Term Solitary Confinement in the State

WASHINGTON, DC - Connecticut has just become the third state in the nation to end the torture of long-term solitary confinement through legislative action, following New Jersey in 2019 and New York in 2021. The PROTECT Act (SB 459) applies to all Connecticut prisons and jails, preventing a person from being held in solitary confinement for more than 15 consecutive days or for more than 30 days within any 60-day period. The Act also prevents minors under the age of 18 from being held in isolated confinement. The PROTECT Act reverses decades of state policy which allowed people to be held in isolation for months, years, and even decades far exceeding the 15-day limit set by the UN and other bodies as meeting the definition of torture.

Rev. Ron Stief, Executive Director of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, said "Those who are subject to more than 15 days in solitary confinement leave prison as torture survivors, and many times they never recover. The Connecticut Governor and state legislators have just struck a blow for humane treatment and reason. Policies that allow people to be tortured in prisons and jails do irreparable harm to corrections officers, to people who are incarcerated, and to families and the broader society who then have to deal with the devastating consequences."

The effort to pass the bill was led by a broad-based Connecticut coalition, Stop Solitary CT, that pushed the legislation over the top through both grassroots advocacy and direct negotiations with leadership in the Connecticut Department of Corrections. Stop Solitary CT also won a provision in the PROTECT Act that creates oversight of Connecticut prisons and jails with a nine-member board, which is to include formerly incarcerated people, that will aid in the screening of candidates for the next correctional ombudsman in the state.

Barbara Fair, Lead Organizer for the Stop Solitary CT campaign, and solitary abolitionist, said: "This has been a long journey and it's in no way over. Passage of the PROTECT Act this session has been an exhausting yet rewarding experience. There was a lot of relationship building on both sides that led to this victory and now the real work begins. With an ombudsman in place supported by a civilian advisory board with formerly incarcerated people as part of the membership, our end goal is to completely eradicate prolonged isolation and violence against incarcerated people and build a more humane system for both incarcerated people and those who work in these environments."

>> [Read a press release from the Office of the Governor about the signing of the bill.](#)

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) is a membership organization committed to ending U.S.-sponsored torture, and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. Through its U.S. Prisons Program, NRCAT provides support and resources to faith and community advocates who will eventually end the torture of long-term solitary confinement state by state through legislation, administrative action, and decarceration. 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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