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Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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VOCAL-NY Applauds NYS Legislature for Passage of the #HALTsolitary Confinement Act Slams Governor Cuomo for Years of Opposition

Today NYS has finally ended a globally recognized human rights abuse, but thousands were forced to suffer as the Governor refused to support the bill until now

ALBANY, NY Last night Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law the [Humane Alternatives to Long-Term \(HALT\) Solitary Confinement Act](#). HALT will limit solitary confinement in prisons and jails to 15 days, eliminate it altogether for especially vulnerable populations in line with United Nations standards, and replace this torture with safer and more meaningful evidence-based interventions. The bill was signed into law after an eight-year grassroots campaign led by people who have survived solitary and people who have had loved ones in solitary.

In response VOCAL-NY released the following statements:

We have been fighting to end solitary confinement for too long. As someone who survived solitary confinement myself, I am so relieved that the legislature finally got this passed. Now no one else will have to go through what I went through, which was torture, **said Jovada Senhouse, community leader and board member at VOCAL-NY**. To be clear, Governor Cuomo did not help us at all and we have been fighting him this whole time. We won today, but we aren't done yet. We will keep fighting until we win parole reform, voting rights for formerly incarcerated and currently incarcerated people and a path for people to challenge wrongful convictions.

This is a big win for people in solitary confinement and those who have survived it, overcoming years of opposition from a Governor who has complete contempt for vulnerable people, including those who are incarcerated. Today we also honor those, like Layleen Polanco and Kalief Browder who did not survive. HALT is now the law, and we need to ensure that it is not watered down or otherwise undermined by any amendments or during implementation, **said VOCAL-NY Civil Rights Campaign Director Nick Encalada-Malinowski**.

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