In Support of Protect Act 2022
Testimony For the 2022 Protect Act Bill No. SB 459

My name is Vernon Vassell #237710. I’m from Bridgeport, Connecticut and I strongly support the Protect Act. I have been incarcerated since May 10, 1999, so approximately 23 years. I have been placed in Solitary Confinement over 100 days over the years. It is a horrible experience. There is no sense of time, no adequate mirror because the mirror attached above the cell sink is permanently smeared to the point there is no visible reflection. They give you food early, breakfast at 4:30 am, lunch at 10:00 am and dinner at 4 pm. So you are left to starve for 12 1/2 hours from dinner until breakfast because Commissary is not permitted during Punitive Segregation. The food portions in Solitary Confinement are smaller than the General Population. They use Food as a weapon to punish us in isolation. There are no phones to talk to loved ones, no social visits and the strip searches you must do prior to being placed in your isolation cell(s) are invasive and dehumanizing and they get away with it, under the guise of “Safety and Security.” They make us spread our buttocks in front of 7 to 14 staff members to look up our Anal Cavity and some time they make us do it “Twice” to humiliate us. If you refuse they give you a disciplinary ticket and Chain you down. So we are Forced to Comply to Avoid Further Punishment.
The psychological stress of being isolated is overwhelming because it is human nature to be social. So people lash out under the inhumane conditions of isolation then are chained up for being disruptive, causing more psychological trauma.

Inmates are only permitted showers in isolated confinement on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. So over the weekend depending on when you last took your shower Friday and the subsequent shower on Monday an inmate can go 72 hours without a shower. There is also no skin care treatment permitted in isolation, such as lotion or hair grease. So your skin is Ashy and your scalp remains dry during your time in segregation.

Staff also use Training, Short STAFF by Strategically "all calling out on Certain days " especially holidays " to keep us lock down for a whole 24 hours or even days at times. Then they use their "go to move" to circumvent any violation by claiming the lock-down was due to "Safety and Security Concerns." Passing the "protect Act" will protect inmate and give oversight so inmate's human rights are not violated.

These are my personal and direct experiences of isolation confinement and what i have witnessed Upfront In my 23 years of incarceration. These Subhuman Conditions is why i support Protect Act 2022.

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