

Good morning. My name is Edmund Duffy. I am the Warden of the George Motchan Detention Center located on Rikers Island. I am appreciative of this opportunity to present testimony regarding the proposed Enhanced Supervision Housing.

The proposed rule will allow our department to better manage its most dangerous inmates while getting away from its present reliance on Punitive Segregation to control violence.

Proposed Enhanced Supervision Housing targets those inmates who are identified as being gang leaders, who have repeatedly assaulted staff or inmates, or who have been found in possession of smuggled in scalpel blades or scalpel like implements. In other words, Enhanced Supervision Housing is for inmates who have demonstrated that they are ongoing threats to the safety of others.

Gang Leaders

Under current conditions, the security risk group leaders largely pull strings from behind the scenes, instigating large scale incidents, severely injuring inmates who attempt to engage in positive behaviors, and escalating the threat of violence during congregate programs.

The presence of powerful gang leaders intimidates other gang members and non-gang member inmates into certain behaviors. By separating the gang leaders from the general population, other inmates will be protected from their influence. Inmates will be less pressured to join gangs and low-level gang members will be less pressured to follow orders or prove their loyalty. While in Enhanced Supervision Housing, the department will be able to closely monitor Gang Leader behaviors and will be in better position to prevent serious gang related incidents.

Repeatedly Assaultive Inmates

It is evident that long-term Punitive Segregation has not had the impact of preventing violence. The placement of inmates with violence proclivity into Enhanced Supervision Housing, with higher staffing ratios and limited intermingling with the general population, would provide a higher level of safety

for the remainder of the population, without compromising the wellbeing of the offender. In addition to providing important safety to the general population, ESH offers a better chance for inmates to rehabilitate their behaviors, because they will interact in smaller groups, with more supervision, and participate in programs, which will make them learn and practice positive behaviors. These positive behaviors are encouraged in ESH through incentives like contact visits, which inmates can earn.

It is important to note that the category is for those who have repeatedly demonstrated assaultive behaviors and who continue to be threats to the safety of others.

Inmates with Weapons

Scalpels have become the weapon of choice by our most problematic populations. They are concealable and have cause extremely gruesome injuries when used. Any individual who has possessed a scalpel presents himself as one of our greatest threats - that is, someone willing to smuggle, transport, and ultimately utilize a tool designed to cut through flesh and muscle.

We understand that most inmates while incarcerated are compliant. They seek an atmosphere of safety and routine, but a small group of inmates prevent that.

This small percentage of inmates, who have flagrant disregard for the rules and for the wellbeing of others, needs to be managed in a manner that will protect the majority of inmates who chose not to delve into negative behaviors.

In short, we are seeking a designed, structured method of addressing the bullies who are responsible for the unprecedented increase in inmate violence. In my six years of experience as a Warden and 28 years of experience in corrections, it is my professional opinion and sincere belief that our department is in need of a fundamental change in the way we do business. Support of Enhanced Supervision Housing is the first step in changing culture, where those who seek to disrupt,

assault, and bully will be managed in an environment proportionate to the threat level they present.

Your consideration in giving us the ability to improve conditions of confinement within the George Motchan Detention Center, within our Department, would be the first step to meaningful reform.