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NYC BOARD OF CORRECTIONS

January 18, 2020

C/o NYC Board of Corrections
1 Centre Street, Room 2213
New York, NY 10007

Dear NYC Board of Corrections:

If NYDOCS's mission statement really is "Care, Custody, and Control," they had better get really serious about the "care" part. Solitary confinement is equivalent to state sanction torture. We know that torture is not care. Therefore, torture is not care for inmates.

Cages are designed for animals. We know that human beings are animals, mammals in fact; however, under solitary confinement we are essentially regressing humans to their primal selves. There's no statistical data that highlights that solitary confinement guarantees safer prison environments. Here's a novel idea, why not take the resources used to house inmates in solitary confinement and provide better mental health diagnosis for the inmate population, since NYC (and NYS) has turned jails/prisons into ad hoc insane asylums, of old.

I have not experienced solitary confinement, in my nearly eighteen years of confinement. But, I have never used heroin; and, with the daily news reports--I am better informed that to do so would be hazardous to my health. Information enforces how one will respond. I have witnessed solitary confinement's affects on many people I know and didn't know. Those who have been released from solitary confinement struggle to regain their normal senses (thought process, depth perception, and (their) taste/smell). I, to this day, have this one guy who happened to land in a cell next to me, and starved from the "loaf" diet he had been made to eat--believes I make the WORLD's best pasta--because he had been in the "box" (solitary confinement/SHU) for so long. It was canned ravioli, Campbell's.

PETA (People for the ethical treatment of animals) would never stand for any animal being placed in solitary confinement-like conditions. Why do we, accept the inhumane treatment of other human beings? I have some ideas why this phenomenon exist--but I am not in power to affect change, yet. So, I implore you to end solitary confinement, and all its other names; Confining humans in kennel (with only a few hours outside of it--at any given time) is abhorrent, abominable. NYC's DOC (and NYS's DOCCS) is conditioning people to have further mental health issues, before their release back to society. Is that NYDOCS new initiative, a part of their new mission statement? Solitary confinement is not the "Care" any of us need.

Sincerely,



E. Paris Whitfield