

Councilmember Bill Perkins

## Blueprint for Ending Solitary Confinement in NYC Jails

Good morning!

Thank you so much for being here; I would like to acknowledge the New York Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement and Jails Action Coalition New York City for organizing this press conference and their tireless leadership for advocating for those “behind the wall” being abused by city and state sanctioned torture. What some would call the being in “the box” and others call being in solitary confinement.

New York City continues to have a human rights crisis right in our own backyard. Our correctional system is broken—it spends more time abusing and corralling humans like animals than it does helping them to heal, learn and grow.

This inhumanity is predominantly visited upon people of color who are so often treated unfairly and with a prejudiced approach. This unconstitutional inequity spans our entire criminal justice system.

Solitary Confinement is particularly egregious and very inhumane; the repeated incidents of torture and sub-human conditions at Rikers Islands and other city jails are cause for immediate action.

I proudly stand in solidarity with all of you to ENDING SOLITARY CONFINEMENT in NEW YORK CITY.

If we are to advance as a society of human beings, as well as a government that creates effective policy we must move from a distrustful, discipline and punish model to one that helps people address core issues.

The pursuit of ending solitary confinement does not end here locally here in the city. There is legislation currently in Albany call the HALT Solitary Confinement Act, while in the New York State Senate I was be the lead Senate sponsor of that bill. Which challenges the status quo policy of the use of solitary confinement. Wisely substituting a rehabilitative and therapeutic model in place of isolation so that individuals can receive the programming, support and interventions needed to help them rehabilitate and grow.

How long will we allow this state-sanctioned torture to continue while the most defenseless and vulnerable among us are subject to such inhumane treatment?”