

# Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

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## The Nation in Lockdown

In the United States today, at least 80,000 people are held in some form of isolated confinement, including some 25,000 in supermax prisons. This extreme form of confinement goes by many names, such as administrative segregation, disciplinary confinement, security housing, and restricted housing. It commonly consists of 22 to 24 hours lock down in a small cell, without programming or usually privileges. Terms in solitary confinement extend to months, years and decades.

Solitary confinement causes serious psychological damage, increases recidivism, and fails to reduce other forms of prison violence. It also costs a lot, approximately three times that of general population imprisonment (\$75,000 per year as opposed to \$25,000).

The Federal Bureau of Prisons hold more than 11,000 people in some form of segregation, including about 400 in its supermax prison in Florence CO. [Write *Solitary Watch*, PO Box 11374 Washington DC 20008 for info re original sources.]

## VICTORY AGAINST TORTURE

Also in January, the Chicago city council unanimously passed a resolution against torture. Although a symbolic act, by doing so, Chicago, with its shameful history of promoting and condoning torture, became the first city in the nation to officially condemn it. We shouldn't have had to ask our elected officials to pass legislation proscribing torture. It will be a long road to raise the consciousness of the general public that torture is a reality; that it is happening and will continue until we demand that it stop.

The resolution was a step supported by the National Religious Campaign Against Torture and the Illinois Coalition Against Torture, among others, which collected 3,500 signatures to present to the city council. Yet not one major Chicago newspaper or TV station covered the passage of this resolution.

## LONG SENTENCES MEAN

Long sentences mean that many current prisoners will not leave prison until they become extremely old according to a January 2012 report by *Human Rights Watch* ("Old Behind Bars: The Aging Prison Population in the United States," 104 pages. HRW is located at 350 Fifth Ave, 34th floor, New York NY 10118).

Of state prisoners age 51 or older, 40.6% have sentences ranging from between more than 20 years to life. One in ten state prisoners is doing a life sentence. Of state prisoners age 61 or older, 15% have been in prison more than 20 years. In New York State, 28% of those 60 or over have been in prison continuously for 20 years or more. Of federal prisoners age 51 or older, 11% are doing sentences ranging from 30 years to life. And they carry the extra burden of knowing there is not now any federal parole.

Older prisoners, both women and men, are the most rapidly growing age group in U.S. prisons. Because of their higher rates of illness and impairment, they incur medical costs that are three to nine times higher than those of younger prisoners. Medical problems for younger prisoners most frequently occur between the ages of 42 and 55. They include paraplegics, quadriplegics, stroke victims, and those with end-stage cancer, renal failure, and late-stage AIDS.

The number of state and federal prisoners age 65 or older grew at 94 times the rate of the overall prison population between 2007 and 2010. The number of prisoners age 65 or older increased by 63%. At the same time that the total prison population increased by 0.7% There are now 26,200 prisoners age 65 or older. There are now 124,000 prisoners age 55 or older, 8% of the prison population.

### Additional Resource

*Project for Older Prisoners*  
George Washington University Law School,  
2000 H Street NW, Washington DC  
20052, 202-994-7063.

Works to get parole or improved health care for older prisoners in LA, MD, MI, NC, VA & DC. Not all cases accepted.

# IN MEMORIAM

Forty-three (43) people were officially murdered by U.S. state governments 2011. Their names are:

Of these people, over 34% (15) were African-Americans, and just over 30% (13) were murdered by the state of Texas

01/06/12	Billy Don Alverson	OK
01/11/11	Jeffrey Matthews	OK
01/13/11	Leroy White	AL
01/25/11	Emmanuel Hammond	GA
02/09/11	Martin Link	MO
02/15/11	Michael Hall	TX
02/17/11	Frank Spisak	OH
02/22/11	Timothy Adams	TX
03/10/11	Johnnie Baston	OH
03/29/11	Eric King	AZ
03/31/11	William Glenn Boyd	AL
04/12/11	Clarence Carter	OH
05/03/11	Cary Kerr	TX
05/06/11	Jeffrey Motts	SC
05/10/11	Benny Stevens	MS
05/17/11	Daniel Bedford	OH
05/17/11	Rodney Gray	MS
05/19/11	Jason Williams	AL
05/25/11	Daniel Beaty	AZ
06/01/11	Gayland Bradford	TX
06/06/11	Lee Taylor	TX

06/16/11	Eddie Powell III	AL
06/21/11	Milton Mathis	TX
06/23/11	Roy Blankenship	GA
06/30/11	Richard Bible	AZ
07/07/11	Humberto Leal	TX
07/19/11	Thomas West	AZ
07/20/11	Mark Stroman	TX
07/21/11	Andrew Grant DeYoung	GA
07/29/11	Robert Jackson III	DE
08/10/11	Martin Robles	TX
08/18/11	Jerry Jackson	VA
09/13/11	Steven Woods	TX
09/21/11	Lawrence Brewer	TX
09/21/11	Troy Anthony Davis	GA
09/22/11	Derrick Mason	AL
09/28/11	Manuel Valle	FL
10/20/11	Christopher Johnson	AL
10/27/11	Frank Garcia	TX
11/15/11	Reginald Brooks	OH
11/15/11	Oba Chandler	FL
11/16/11	Guadalupe Esparza	TX
11/18/11	Paul Rhoades	ID

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## WE STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH ALL THOSE CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY

"Mass incarceration is the new Jim Crow. From 1970 to 1995, the jailing of African Americans increased 7 fold. African Americans are 12% of the U.S. population--and 53% of its prison population. There are more African Americans enslaved under correctional control today than there were in 1850."

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Copies of the Newsletter will be included in all correspondence we send out. To receive the Newsletter monthly, send us self-addressed, stamped envelopes (with the CPR return address) --up to 12 at one time.

Please continue to send us address changes and renewal requests, in order to receive the yearly holiday card/new calendar.

Also, please note that the only address to use to be sure to reach us continues to be: PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504. And remember: NONE OF US ARE LAWYERS OR LEGAL WORKERS.

Many, many thanks to the *Real Cost of Prisons Project* for making our Newsletter available on-line for free downloading and distribution. It is at: <http://www.realcostofprisonsproject.org/coalition.html>. This is a GREAT site!

We continue to depend on our readers' financial contributions to be able to go on with our work. Thank you so much for your support!

## Licencias para indocumentados en limbo lunes, el 6 de febrero de 2012

Un comité judicial de la Cámara de Representantes del estado de Nuevo México aprobó 9-6 una medida que intenta eliminar la ley actual que otorga licencias de conducir para inmigrantes indocumentados.

Esta propuesta se enviará a la Cámara de Representantes para debate. El año pasado la Cámara aprobó una propuesta similar, pero no pasó en el Senado.

La Gob. Susana ("La Gusana") Martínez dice que hay corrupción extensiva en el sistema actual de licencias, lo cual merita cancelar la ley.

Je, je, je....

## NO SOMOS MERCANCIA EN MANOS DE BANQUEROS Y POLITICOS

### PRISON HEALTH NEWS asks you to

Please send them your your art and articles for consideration for publication in upcoming issues of *Prison Health News*. Include clear permission to publish, how you would like your name to appear (or not) and do not exceed 700 words.

Send to:  
c/o Philadelphia FIGHT  
1233 Locust Street, 5th floor  
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