

MEDIA ALERT

For more information:

Lizzie Lewandowski
elewandowski@restorejustice.org

Restore Justice Commends Lawmakers for Bringing Transparency to the Use of Solitary Confinement in Illinois

March 24, 2025 - Chicago, IL.

Governor JB Pritzker signed [Public Act 103-1074](#) (previously House Bill 4828) into law on March 21, 2025, advancing transparency in the use of solitary confinement in Illinois. [Public Act 103-1074](#) requires the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) to collect and publish data on the use of solitary confinement in its facilities.

There are no limits in Illinois law on how long a person can be held in solitary confinement, despite its well-documented harms on the health and well-being of people who are incarcerated. Currently, there is no publicly available data about who is subjected to solitary confinement, why, and for how long. This simple transparency measure brings about an urgent and necessary change for the sake of safety and responsible government.

House Bill 4828 passed with bipartisan support. Senator Robert Peters and Representative Kevin Olickal sponsored the measure.

“We cannot sit on our hands and ignore the detrimental impact that restrictive housing has on incarcerated people,” said **Senator Robert Peters** (D-Chicago). “This new law will not only provide valuable data on solitary confinement practices, it does so with the goal of holding our systems accountable as we take another step toward making our communities safer.”

Representative Kevin Olickal (D-Chicago) added, “The United Nations recognizes prolonged solitary confinement as a form of torture. With the signing of HB4828, the Nelson Mandela Data Collection Act, Illinois is ensuring we track its use and prevent abuse. I thank Governor Pritzker for recognizing the urgency of this issue and signing this bill into law. This is a crucial step toward transparency, accountability, and real reform in our prison system.”

An extensive body of research spanning more than 150 years unambiguously demonstrates the detrimental effects of solitary confinement on the health and well-being of people who are incarcerated. Research provides no conclusive evidence that solitary confinement makes facilities or communities safer. The United Nations rules on incarceration, known as the “Mandela Rules,” specify that under international human rights law, solitary confinement for more than 15 days is torture.

“What I remember being the most distressing about solitary confinement was the sense of hopelessness I would feel. It felt like the days stretched so long. It was a whole other reality,” shares Restore Justice Future Leaders Apprentice **Brian Beals**. “The overuse of solitary confinement needs to stop because the long-term damage that it can inflict surely outweighs any usefulness it has. This bill is a start to that.” Beals spent 35 years incarcerated in Illinois prisons before he was exonerated in 2023.

Restore Justice collaborated with the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights, Uptown People’s Law Center, and Access Living to create transparency in the use of solitary confinement through this legislation. Restore Justice works to improve prison conditions that erode human dignity. Many of our staff and board members have been directly impacted by incarceration.

Restore Justice, which comprises [Restore Justice Foundation](#) and [Restore Justice Illinois](#), works to address issues faced by those serving life or de-facto life sentences, their families, and their communities. Founded in 2015 by a dedicated group of advocates that included the late former Congressman, Federal Judge, and White House Counsel Abner Mikva, Restore Justice trains and supports advocates, conducts research, nurtures partnerships, and develops policy solutions that will roll back ineffective “tough on crime” policies of the past, replacing them with compassionate, smart, and safe policies for the future.