



**Connecticut Conference
United Church of Christ**

125 Sherman Street
Hartford, CT 06105-2281

**Testimony in Support of House Bill 7302: An Act Concerning Isolated Confinement
and Correctional Staff Training and Wellness
Submitted by, Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate
Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ
March 24 , 2017**

Senator Doyle, Senator Kissel, Representative Tong, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate for the Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ and I am writing today in support of H.B. 7302 An Act Concerning Isolated Confinement and Correctional Staff Training and Wellness to codify procedures concerning isolated confinement, provide for greater transparency concerning isolated confinement and provide training and wellness initiatives for correctional staff.

I am writing on behalf of the 237 congregations and more than 67,500 people in our state's churches. In fact, the United Church of Christ (UCC) is the largest Protestant denomination in Connecticut. Nationally, the UCC has more than 5,700 congregations with nearly 1 million members. In 2014 the assembled delegates and ministers of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ met and voted on a Resolution that calls upon the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ to call for an end to Mass Incarceration for Non-Violent Offenses, to advocate for passage of legislation that promotes alternatives to mass incarceration, and to support racial and economic justice in criminal sentencing and restorative justice principles in all possible circumstances

Solitary Confinement is the practice of placing a prisoner alone in a cell for 22-24 hours a day with little human contact, reduced or no natural light, restriction or denial of reading material, television, radios or other property, severe limits on visitation and the inability to participate in group activities. People placed in solitary exhibit a variety of negative psychological reactions, including severe and chronic depression, self-mutilation, decreased brain function, hallucinations and revenge fantasies.¹

It is an outrageous abuse of human rights to keep people in solitary confinement. None of God's children deserve to be in solitary confinement and the act of solitary confinement needs to end.

Thank you for your work and the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of H. B. 7302

Blessings,
Michele Mudrick
(860) 796-3822
Michelem@ctucc.org

¹ American Civil Liberties Union



God is still speaking,

860.233.5564 • toll free) 866.367.2822 • fax) 860.231.8111 • www.ctucc.org



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