

My name is Natasha White, Director of Community Engagement at IAHR and I am a survivor of solitary confinement. I can tell you firsthand that locking a person in a cell for 24 hours a day—weeks, months, even years—produces no positive results. It is inhumane, counterproductive, and causes irreversible mental, emotional, and physical harm.

According to Ben Conarck's February 12 article in the Baltimore banner, Maryland's correctional officers union recognizes that isolating people without access to meaningful programming and engagement contributes to violence inside of Maryland's prisons. So why are they still doing it?

Furthermore Ninety-five percent of incarcerated individuals will return to society. Many of them are broken, spiritually and mentally, due to prolonged isolation and a blatant disregard for their humanity. Solitary does not contribute to safety; it breeds hostility, anxiety, and long-term harm.

We live in a society that relies on data and research to guide change. Does that not apply to incarcerated lives? The evidence is clear—research and data overwhelmingly show that this practice does far more harm than good.

We must take action to end this cruel and unnecessary practice. Passing SB107 is not just a step toward justice; it is a commitment to human dignity and the true purpose of incarceration—rehabilitation and reintegration. I implore you to stand on the right side of history and support this critical legislation