

Subject: Written Testimony in Support of SB908 – Correctional Services – Restrictive Housing

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I write in strong support of SB908.

As a survivor of four years in solitary confinement, I can attest firsthand to the profound and lasting harm caused by prolonged isolation. Solitary confinement is not a rehabilitative measure. It is an inhumane practice that inflicts deep psychological, emotional, and physical damage on those subjected to it.

During my time in isolation, I was denied meaningful programming, education, and any opportunity for rehabilitation. Instead of preparing individuals to return to their communities in a healthier and more stable condition, solitary confinement leaves people mentally fractured and spiritually depleted. The only lasting outcomes of my time in isolation have been irreversible trauma and memories that will never fade.

I endured physical and sexual abuse while confined and witnessed multiple suicides. These experiences are not isolated incidents but are indicative of a system that exacerbates harm rather than promotes safety. Prolonged restrictive housing does not enhance public safety. It does not reduce violence. It does not foster accountability or growth. It produces suffering.

SB908 represents an essential step toward aligning Maryland's correctional policies with humane standards and evidence-based practices. Limiting the use and duration of restrictive housing is both a moral and practical imperative.

I respectfully urge the Committee to take a clear stance against practices that amount to torture and to support SB908. The people in our correctional system are human beings, and our policies must reflect that fundamental truth.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to justice and public safety.

Natasha White