

Senator Deschambault, Rep Warren and honorable members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee.

My name is Micheal James MDOC #47396. I am a resident of the administrative segregation unit at Maine Correctional Center in Windham. I am writing in support of LD 696 An Act to Ban Solitary Confinement in Maine's Correctional System.

I've spent about 85% of my time in solitary confinement and I've been in prison for 21 1/2 years. It (solitary confinement) has made me into a person I'm not proud of. In the last year I've done at least eight months in segregation. I've been in segregation now since 11/17/2021. I've tried to get sent to the outside hospital by cutting my arm open and packing it with fecal matter to infect it just so I could be around people who care. I've done so many things to harm my self. I'm lucky to be alive being confined with no sort of human interaction it wears down the mind. For me so much of the time the only way out of segregation is to kill myself. They don't put staff down here that care. Every one has an attitude. When you feel as dark as I do, life itself does not matter. Half the staff torment me and cause me bodily harm. You loose the ability to care.

And you do things you never would have done before. If I was given the chance to be a person, then I would not have suffered so much. I've endured so many beatings by the hands of staff. I have issues now of simply being around people. My whole demeanor now is that everyone is a threat and no one can be trusted. I'm so used to being in solitary confinement. I don't know how to deal with population any more. The staff here don't care. They just throw you in segregation and toss away the key. It's so hard to get out of segregation now because unit manager Dame does whatever he wants to do. If you try to contact the wardens office you get zero response and no help. If you don't act out then you wont get your needs meet. So why does this type of situation keep going on? I get released in November of this year and it's looking like I will be released

directly from solitary confinement. How is this helping me or anyone for that matter?
Solitary confinement is meant to break you and tear you apart and thats exactly what
its done to me but its made me so much worse.

Please support LD 696 An Act to Ban solitary Confinement in Maine's Correctional
System.

Thank-you,
Michael James