



November 14, 2018

Honourable Ralph Goodale
Minister of Public Safety and
Government of Canada

Re: Bill C-83 - Changes to Administrative and
Disciplinary Segregation (Solitary Confinement)

Dear Minister Goodale:

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) are pleased to see that steps are being taken by your government to mitigate the impact of segregation on inmates in Canadian prisons. There is no doubt that prolonged incarceration in a solitary cell has devastating effects and may even amount to human-rights abuses.

It is disappointing however to see that Bill C-83 does not address time limits on segregation placements or for the introduction of independent oversight. There is significant risk of serious psychological harm to inmates some of whom may already be suffering from mental illness resulting in self harm and even suicide. The addition of an independent investigator would go a long way to ensuring that every avenue has been explored leading to administrative segregation before this takes place. As pointed out by Dr. Ivan Zinger the correctional ombudsman it is also worrying to anticipate the possibility that the new units will lead to a greater number of placements.

Further, it is a concern that any new legislation will not apply to provincial jails. NCWC encourages you to address the issue of solitary confinement with the provinces to ensure that these inmates are offered the same consideration as those in federal institutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Sandra Cohen-Rose', is written in a cursive style.

Sandra Cohen-Rose
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The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) has been the leading national voice of women for the past 125 years. A plaque has been erected in Allan Gardens in Toronto recognizing the establishment of NCWC as a National Historic Event. NCWC's initiatives have contributed significantly to the establishment of Canada's social welfare system, and the Council continues to work to improve the lives of women, children and society.

cc: Senator Kim Pate