



Interfaith Communities United For Justice And Peace

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Religious Communities must stop blessing war and violence!

ICUJP Statement on Prolonged Solitary Confinement

Prolonged solitary confinement, as practiced in U.S. prisons, is a form of torture and a moral affront to the conscience of our country.

We applaud Senator Durbin and the Judicial Committee for holding these hearings. We urge you to work with states and partner communities to develop legislation that will end this torture.

Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace (ICUJP), a Los Angeles organization of religious leaders, clergy and lay, of many faiths dedicated to restoring justice through nonviolent means, is working in close partnership with the National Religious Campaign Against Torture to end this barbaric practice through organized protests, appeals to government officials, letters and op-ed pieces in newspapers, and dramatic presentations.

The dehumanizing effects of confinement, for as long as 30 years at a time, in windowless solitary housing units (SHUs) 23 out of 24 hours a day, have been eloquently voiced in letters from prisoners, which have been compiled by ICUJP into a dramatic reading series called "If the SHU Fits-Voices from Solitary Confinement"

Prolonged solitary confinement causes incalculable psychological and emotional distress, exacerbating pre-existing symptoms of mental illness and creating new ones.

As interfaith leaders we are united by our common religious belief in the fundamental dignity of each human being and in our opposition to the cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of prisoners subjected to prolonged solitary confinement.