

On 3/1/18 members of the Milwaukee Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee made a demand delivery to the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. They delivered the following document at the meeting of the DOC Committee on Inmate/Youth Deaths and the office of DOC Secretary Jon Litscher, and afterwards delivered this to the offices of every member of the Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Corrections, and the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety. Members from EXPO, Madison GDC and Freedom Inc also showed up to help with this demand delivery.

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This committee is meeting today to evaluate recent deaths of people incarcerated in Wisconsin. Too many people have died, and there is a pattern of abuse and toxic conditions that has led to these deaths. We are concerned with the future deaths that will happen, and the practices in the DOC that lead to this.

In order to stop future deaths, it is urgent that the Wisconsin Department of Corrections:

- 1) Shutdown the Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility, where 17 people have died
- 2) Reverse arbitrary and toxic regulations imposed at Columbia Correctional Institution started in 2017
- 3) End longterm administrative confinement
- 4) Stop force-feedings imposed for political protest
- 5) Release parole-eligible and aging prisoners, who are given inadequate medical treatment

Failure to take these concerns seriously will lead to continued stress, erosion of incarcerated people's mental health and further deaths. Continued indifference towards the human lives sacrificed in your prisons is intolerable. We hope to see the start of meaningful changes made towards ending these abusive structures by 4/1/18. We will not accept this situation continuing and if changes are not made we will take further action.

To speak to the problems of the Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility we quote one of the many stories of abuse experienced by someone currently imprisoned there:

"I was arrested with all my psychiatric medicine on me, however when I told the psychologist about it at intake, he told me all he could do was tell the psychiatrist to make an appointment. It took 45 days to be seen by the psychiatrist despite the many requests I put in begging for my medication. After I was finally seen I was denied my medication for security reasons, even though medication is passed at controlled times by a certified nurse and a CO to stand guard. To this day I am not receiving my prescribed medication despite my many complaints. I am being housed in a cell that is smaller than my segregation cell at Fox Lake. Not only is it smaller but I'm forced to be in here with another individual. Not only that but at least every other week we get a third

person on a boat [plastic sled bed] for a few days. We are locked in the cell for 19.55 on the days we have long dayroom and on the other days we are locked in for 20 hours. Another cruel and unusual form of punishment I am forced to endure while being held hostage at MSDF is I have no access to sunlight or outdoor rec nor even fresh air!”

To speak to the need to reverse the toxic and arbitrary regulations at Columbia Correctional Institution, we quote several of the stories of abuse experienced by people currently imprisoned there:

“Warden Bitmann redid the rule book. As a result a push back occurred. People were protesting the assigned seating and other smaller causes. Staff had no sense of what the new rulebook stated but yet they tried to enforce it.” “They keep changing prison policies all the time and we either don’t know them or the COs don’t know them and implement their own and then write you up for it.”

To speak to the need to end longterm Administrative Confinement, we quote one of the many stories of abuse experienced by someone currently held in this condition:

“Every time I come to seg I lose myself a little more. I have my religious freedoms completely denied. I’m subject to psychological torture, which leads to my continual deterioration of mental faculties. I am denied human contact, which leads me to further anti-social behavior, which in turn causes me more problems. The public needs to be aware of the damage being done to so many prisoners across the state and nationwide, and to act to correct the problems of long term segregation sentences.”

An injury to one is an injury to all.

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