

From: [Darlene Mcday](#)
To: [BOC \(BOC\)](#)
Subject: Fwd: Written testimony 4/13 and 4/14
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Hello

I am writing this testimony to hopefully help the board to consider how the rules need to be designed in order to protect people. I have attached the redacted COC report that I was provided through a foul request regarding the death of my son Dante Taylor. What happened to Dante should not be allowed to happen in a correctional facility. I want you to be very aware about how TRANSPARENCY and ACCOUNTABILITY are nearly non existent in NY law enforcement and especially in correctional facilities. I will speak at the meeting but I wanted you all to digest this information. The DOCCS is very well aware of the abuses of the officers involved as the OSI investigation revealed and DOCCs provided letters to several officers after the investigation terminating their employment, however d/t the powerful unions in NY somehow those officers were able to keep their job. I am still waiting to get a copy of transcripts from that hearing that happened in 2019 that I've been denied access to. My son and 22-year-old social being had his family, support system Taken away from him for smoking. Not for being violent, not for having a dangerous weapon, not for hurting anyone. On his first offense he received 90 days and keep block, was not allowed to have any visits, Was not allowed to make any phone calls and was not allowed to buy any commissary. He was locked in his cell at least 23 hours a day and was lucky if he got a shower a few times a week. He was fed the slop that they make there at the prison And denied mental health appointments because "they didn't have staff to walk him over" . DOCCs only seems to know punishment, not reform. Why should the punishment for an issue with drugs be total isolation from support systems. Then there was the abuse and if you've seen a picture of my son after what happened to him on October 6, 2017 you cannot deny that he was abused although the officers lied. The beating was so bad not even their own investigators could hide the facts. I've also not entirely convinced that he killed him self can we need to stop Letting them isolate people and put them in a position to wear staff can claim they committed suicide. As you may remember there were many witnesses to what happened to my son so in that sense I was lucky to be able to figure out the story right away to get details lock down, but most people are totally in the dark. Christopher Cruz his family is still in the dark. It is completely unacceptable and unfair this GANG should be allowed to continue to torture people, to isolate people, to rip families apart, to dehumanize incarcerated individuals and their families. I do understand That officers need to be safe, but so do incarcerated individuals and we need to stop pretending that every officer is just there to do the job he/she was hired to do. Some of them of there because they like the power they feel and they are not just a few bad apples they will completely spoil the bunch. They will intimidate and threaten their own to have others fall in line. So

some things I would like you to focus on.

REAL programming(not a coloring book), people should NEVER lose their right to family support, completely removing phone calls and visits and isolating people is incredibly detrimental and does nothing to correct behavior. My son needed me more than ever. After he was abused he was still denied a phone call. He needed support more than ever. Mental health appointments should NEVER be skipped, especially for staffing issues. Safeguards that include right to advocates MUST be in place. The fox cannot guard the henhouse. We know that without strong oversight DOCCS will continue to fail. People will continue to be abused behind closed doors and no one will be held accountable. Also consider that certain populations especially should be prevented from ANY type of isolation. Proper assessments MUST be completed. DOCCS does nothing to correct their employment wrongs. A year after my son died another young man died under similar circumstances in the same prison but the story did not get out. His name was Kaazim Freeman. I also want to add that the "hearing" system that exists within DOCCS is completely arbitrary, my son was denied any counsel or advocate and denied witness. When determining a person's fate especially when they have so little as it is how can we leave them with no advocate? How would preventing my family from seeing or talking to my son help him to not smoke? The rules don't work. A system without the ability to hold its employees accountable is EXTREMELY dangerous and can NEVER work. I implore you to restrict the power of DOCCS to "isolate" as much as you have the ability to do in order to add protections for people in their care, who are the people they unfortunately don't care about.

My son was also abused in Suffolk Jail Riverhead. He had a hearing, found guilty from the hearing officer and charged \$50 for that hearing which was all that was in his commissary. The truth is that the incident was on video, which the existence had been hidden from me for 6 1/2 years. Point is they had a video which exonerated him of any wrong doing but left it up to a hearing officer with lying COs and took away everything. They also proceeded to starve him for 4 days, deny him any toiletries, no showers and had him sleep with no blanket. They taunted him

And told him to kill himself and tried to get other incarcerated people to beat him up as well. Since they denied him phone calls I was not aware until 4 days later when I was finally allowed to visit. I had to have lawyers file a complaint and only then was he moved for his safety. So I say all this to remind you that the most important thing is safety for all, including those people incarcerated whom are left to the mercy of officers, some of whom show no mercy and can have a strong impact on the actions of their peers. Please consider all of this when considering the safeguards that are necessary. Please also open the attachment

Sincerely
Darlene McDay

