



CITIZENS FOR PRISON REFORM

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Citizens for Prison Reform's 2026 Legislative Advocacy Efforts Improving Transparency, Accountability and Oversight

Our current prison conditions create trauma for everyone directly involved in prison care. We must take urgent and coordinated action to improve the health and safety of incarcerated persons, prison staff, and everyone's families. Implementing corrections oversight is a necessary to address current conditions, document problems, and find solutions. This will save money, save lives and reduce harm.

Reports of long-term isolation, medical neglect, mental health neglect, and lack of rehabilitative programming continue to be reported to Citizens for Prison Reform, families, and advocates. These ongoing issues, combined with overall diminished visiting opportunities, create barriers for citizens reintegrating back into families and communities.

Complicating these longstanding concerns, the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) has been in a state of continual crisis with staff shortages for at least a decade, increasing tensions, and adding to an already hostile climate.

❖ **Legislative Corrections Ombudsman Office Expansion – HB5920 and HB5921**

- 2025 Background: SB 156 passed the Senate unanimously.
- The Office of the Legislative Corrections Ombudsman investigates complaints in the state prison system. This bill will require public data reporting, expand who can file complaints, and permit the Ombudsman to invite experts to site visits. There would be no fiscal impact on the Legislative Corrections Ombudsman.

❖ **Family Visitation Rights**

- Sponsor: Rep. DeBoer/Rep. Dievendorf/Rep. McKinney
- Administrative Rule (R. 791.6609 Rule 609 (11) (d) and R. 791.6614 Rule 614 (d)) Allows visits to be taken indefinitely. Revising the Legislative Administrative Rule ensures visits are no longer revoked as punishment for violations unrelated to visitations, keeping families connected for safer community reunification.

❖ **Solitary Confinement**

- Sponsor: Senator Chang
- The use of solitary confinement, known by many names, causes severe physical and psychological harm, such as anxiety, depression, and psychosis. This bill sets limits on the use of isolation, establishes standards of care for people who are separated from the general population, requires detailed data reporting and creates a taskforce to implement more robust alternatives and therapeutic spaces.

❖ **Corrections Oversight**

- Seeking Sponsors
- Creating independent oversight to address transparency and accountability.