

12 Years After the Largest Prison Hunger Strike in U.S. History, The Strike Film Helps Advocates' Call to End Solitary

Through more than 100 screenings across the country, The Strike film supports efforts to mobilize audiences to end the use of solitary confinement.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, July 17, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- July marks 12 years since more than 30,000 incarcerated people across California participated in the largest prison hunger strike in U.S. history, demanding an end to indefinite solitary confinement and inhumane prison

conditions. Today, that historic act of resistance is being honored through education, advocacy, and the film "The Strike." The film's supporting impact campaign, led by [Represent Justice](#), amplifies the call and growing movement to end solitary confinement nationwide.



Poster for the film, The Strike

Premiering on PBS in February 2025, ["The Strike"](#) tells the story of the 2013 California Pelican Bay State Prison hunger strike through the voices of those who led it. The film is a powerful chronicle of collective resistance and a call to confront the ongoing use of solitary confinement in the United States—a practice widely condemned by human rights experts as torture.

According to the advocacy campaign [Unlock the Box](#), an estimated 122,000 people are currently held daily in solitary confinement in U.S. prisons and jails for 22 to 24 hours a day in small cells without meaningful human contact or mental stimulation—conditions known to cause lasting psychological harm. Many more people are held in solitary confinement across immigration detention centers and youth facilities, as well as in prisons and jails where isolation is imposed under different names.

"I spent 40 years in prison, more than 30 of them in solitary confinement... I know what it feels like to be forgotten. But I also know the power of hope, of dignity, and of people believing that you still have something to offer the world," said Jack Morris, 2013 hunger strike survivor featured in "The Strike."

Across the country, momentum is growing to eliminate solitary confinement through legislative reform. The following are some of the 2025 milestones:

Illinois (HB 4828) and Maine (LD 405) passed legislation that requires the Illinois Department of Corrections to collect and publish data on the use of solitary confinement in its facilities.

Maryland also passed a reporting bill (HB 350) aimed at increasing transparency around the treatment of transgender individuals in custody, including the use of solitary confinement.

Pennsylvania passed a study bill (HR 142) as well, designed to capture information about how staffing levels impact the use and harms of solitary confinement on young people. Pennsylvania also passed legislation (HB 1509) this year to limit the use of solitary confinement on vulnerable populations such as pregnant youth.

Arizona passed a bill (SB 1507) to create the state's first Independent Oversight Correction Office, which establishes unlimited facility access to assess things like the use and duration of solitary confinement in each state facility.

New Hampshire (SB 591), Colorado (HB 1013), Louisiana (HB 457), and Nevada (AB 167) passed legislation to expand the protections and rights of youth and adults in solitary confinement.

Utah passed legislation (SB 0024) that amends the state's definition of child abuse to include any conduct involving unreasonably subjecting a child to solitary confinement. Similarly, Hawaii passed SB 694, which bans the placement of minors in adult jails or lockups and restricts any room confinement to a maximum of three hours, ensuring that young people are no longer subjected to adult-style solitary confinement conditions.

Hawaii also passed SB 104, which restricts the use of solitary confinement in state correctional facilities. The law limits confinement to no more than 20 hours per day, requires a hearing within 24 hours of placement, mandates access to basic necessities and pathways back to general population, and establishes oversight and reporting requirements related to restrictive housing.

The End Solitary Confinement Act has reignited congressional momentum to end solitary on the federal level by outlining a bold vision for safer alternatives, earning unprecedented support in its first introduction and poised to gain even broader backing upon reintroduction in the 119th Congress.

Additionally, in recent years, the following states have also seen movement:

Connecticut lawmakers passed legislation (SB 00459) to end prolonged solitary and strengthen oversight of prison conditions (2022), and advocates continue to push for implementation and for lawmakers to go farther.

New York passed the HALT Solitary Confinement Act (2021), which limits solitary to 15 days and bans it entirely for vulnerable populations. In 2024, New York City enacted Local Law 42, which bans solitary confinement beyond four hours and otherwise requires all people to have access to 14 hours of daily out-of-cell time.

Advocates continue to push for full implementation of both laws.

New Jersey passed the Isolated Confinement Restriction Act (2019), instituting limits on prolonged solitary confinement.

Advocates continue to push for full implementation.

To mark the 12th anniversary of the 2013 hunger strike, Represent Justice is encouraging communities to host local screenings, engage in conversations about the harms of solitary confinement, and support legislation that promotes healing and the humane treatment of incarcerated individuals.

Host a screening by visiting representjustice.org/the-strike

The public can also view the film on PBS Passport.

Learn more about the campaign to end solitary confinement at unlocktheboxcampaign.org/

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