

## **SAMPLE LETTER OF SUPPORT – AB 701 (Ortega)**

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Put this on your organization's letterhead, adapt and edit as you see fit
2. Go to: <https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/>
3. Create an account if you do not already have one.
4. Click on "Submit a Letter"
5. Select a bill: **AB 701** and next
6. Select the organization/individual you are submitting on behalf of.
7. Select recipient committee: **Public Safety**
8. Select Stance: **Support**, Subject **AB 701**, upload your letter, review, and submit.
9. Please send a copy of your letter to **Eric Harris** at DRC: [eric.harris@disabilityrightsca.org](mailto:eric.harris@disabilityrightsca.org) and to Byron Briones in Assemblymember Ortega's office: [Byron.Briones@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Byron.Briones@asm.ca.gov)

(ADD LETTERHEAD)

Date

The Honorable Nick Schultz  
Chair, Assembly Public Safety Committee  
1021 O Street, Suite 5210  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Support for AB 701 (Ortega)**

Dear Chair Schultz:

On behalf of (INSERT ORGANIZATION), I write in support of AB 701(Ortega). Solitary confinement is one of the most severe and destructive practices found in carceral settings today. The World Health Organization, United Nations, and other international bodies have recognized solitary confinement as greatly harmful and potentially fatal. In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly ratified the Nelson Mandela Rules, prohibiting any period of segregation beyond 15 days and defining it as torture.<sup>1</sup>

There is an established consensus among experts, advocates, and those who have first-hand experience on the issue: solitary confinement is torture and can have permanent harmful effects on the health of an individual. It is unclear how frequent solitary confinement is used and to what extent it is used in detention facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) published in 2015  
[https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Nelson\\_Mandela\\_Rules-E-book.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Nelson_Mandela_Rules-E-book.pdf)

AB 701 (Ortega) will require the Department of Justice and California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to conduct a one-time comprehensive study on the use of solitary confinement in all detention facilities in California, including jails, prisons and private detention facilities. The study will include specified data about each instance of solitary confinement during the first 9 months of the year of 2026, including, among other data, the time and date solitary confinement began and ended, the facility in which it occurred, and the stated basis for the solitary confinement.

AB 701 defines solitary confinement as the practice of isolating individuals in a cell for 17 hours or more per day, has significant negative implications for mental health, rehabilitation, and public safety. The bill also requires the Department of Justice to provide monthly data to the Legislature and a final report to the Legislature and the Governor, by November 1, 2026. A comprehensive study about the frequency and use of solitary confinement in detention facilities can help guide conversations on creating common safeguards across facilities and inform the Legislature to make future reforms.

(Add paragraph about organization and why you support AB 701)

For the above reasons, we respectfully urge your “AYE” vote on AB 701 (Ortega). Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

(ADD SIGNATURE & CONTACT INFO)

Cc: Byron Briones, Office of Assemblymember Ortega