

## TREATMENT NOT TORTURE

For the last 30 years, the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) has routinely warehoused people with mental illnesses in solitary confinement, rather than provide meaningful treatment. Solitary confinement is torture that causes mental distress to everyone. For people with underlying conditions, it is especially devastating. People with mental illness in solitary confinement routinely engage in self harm or lash out at prison staff.

IPP represents about 65 people who have been designated as seriously mentally ill by IDOC. Our clients have spent years – or even decades – in solitary confinement. During prolonged isolation, each of our clients engaged in low-level conduct, such as spitting or throwing water. Each was then prosecuted with a serious felony charge, often repeatedly, further criminalizing mental illness. As a result of these prosecutions, our clients are each serving additional years or even decades in prison; one client has been sentenced to an additional 68 years of prison time.

Through this work, IPP is not only fighting for the freedom of its clients, but has also successfully changed the way IDOC treats serious mental illness.



### HERMAN T.

Herman T. was first incarcerated at 20 years old. Despite a documented history of mental illness, prison staff kept Herman in solitary confinement for more than two decades. The unbearable isolation weighed on Herman. When he began to act out, a natural response to prolonged torture, the state responded in force, repeatedly prosecuting him with a new felony charge. In total, Herman was prosecuted seven times, resulting in 56 years of additional prison time.