



JOE BALTAS #339650
Walker C.I.
1153 East St. South
Suffield, CT 06080

1 / 13 / 2026

To: Joint Committee on Judiciary
Legislative Office Bldg., Rm 2500
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: TESTIMONIAL REGARDING CONDITIONS OF CONFINEMENT IN CONN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

I have been incarcerated since 2006 at the age of 18, and the Department of Corrections ("DOC") has transferred me out of state several times over the course of the last 8 years. During my incarceration in Conn DOC I have spent years in Northern, MacDougall, Walker, Corrigan, Garner and Cheshire, as well as some small time in the New Haven and Hartford County Corr Centers. I have a unique understanding and perspective of the conditions in the conn DOC as I have personally experienced them for two decades, and have observed and experienced the worst of this states DOC.

The conditions of confinement in Conn DOC have never been worse. We have never been treated worse, abused so much or deprived of so much. The functioning of the facilities and the competency and conduct of staff have never been worse. No one knows how to do their job or they just don't care, as there is no accountability of any kind. The simplest of tasks and duties go uncompleted, and the basic essentials we are entitled to are only received if we get them for ourselves.

The PROTECT Act has accomplished nothing, nor is any provision of the law followed. There is not a single aspect of the law that the DOC complies with, in fact the issues the law was designed to address have gotten worse. Inmates are still placed in segregation for anything and everything, even the most frivolous offenses, no alternative is ever considered nor any review of such placement ever conducted. If any inmate receives a disciplinary report they are taken to seg and left there (a review of the Admin. Det. records will show not a single inmate was ever released from that status until they were subsequently found guilty of the report and completed their punitive seg sanction), and now the DOC uses the PROTECT Act to leave inmates in Seg past their scheduled "release" date saying all they have to do, is after 15 days give them 4 hours out of cell time instead of 2 (they in fact only receive 1½ because the DOC counts the 30 min in the shower as "out of cell time"). The conditions in RHU are not the least restrictive necessary, there are no books or writing materials provided or available.

The oppression and abuse of the Conn DOC is not limited to myself. In the last 8 months just in the Walker RHU I have witnessed dozens of atrocities.

On or about // /25 an inmate in the RHU told staff he was suicidal, they encouraged him to harm himself and did not report or secure mental health treatment, he proceeded to hang himself, when he did hang himself, a c/o Bennet used the opportunity to enter the cell alone, close the door behind him and assault and beat the inmate. Then, when more staff arrived and the inmate was on the floor with Bennet hitting him, Lt. Laprey took the opportunity to mace the victim and more c/los jumped on him and struck him. He was then taken to an outside hospital for his injuries.

As recently as early December 2025, I witnessed them bring the inmate who just killed himself and was the subject of numerous news reports, into the RHU and put into RHU Cell 7, where they left him unclothed, without footwear and tortured him for days. They refused to feed him, and they continued to bang on his door and leave his light on so he could not sleep, they spent hours every day telling him that they were going to kill him and rape him, and they specifically threatened to enter his cell on third shift and do this. He reported these threats to mental health staff, and I being a witness reported them to the mental health staff who refused to report or act on these issues (I also have recorded phone calls and emails that I reported these abuses prior to his death). He himself told the mental health staff he was suicidal, and they took him off suicide watch, moved him to Bmod and that night he (allegedly) committed suicide. In response all of the DOC personnel at Walker threw a celebration party for a job well done.

I could describe dozens more incidents over the past few months, let alone the years. But the sum and total of it, is that these prisons are horrors, and the DOC puts its efforts into a system of silence and corruption and cover ups.

The Ombudsman is no better, he had been notified of these atrocities and he takes no action of any kind. He is in bed with the DOC, he makes reports about lacking medical care to create a false narrative and perception that he is doing his duty, while in truth he is refusing to address the real problems and abuses in these prisons and he is assisting the DOC in covering up and concealing the most significant misconduct, abuse, oppressions and tortures.

Should this Committee want more information, more testimony or evidence I am available and willing to co-operate fully with any investigation into the atrocities of the Conn DOC.

Submitted,


Joe Baltas

SPECIAL NEEDS STATUS

INDIVIDUALIZED FACILITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

DATE: June 17, 2025

INMATE NAME: Baltas, Joe

INMATE NUMBER: 339650

FACILITY: MacDougall Walker Correctional Institution, Walker Building

CLASSIFICATION DOMAIN	SCORE	SUBCODES
Mental Health	2	
Medical Score	3	
SRG	1	
Overall	4	

Disciplinary Reports to Date

Mr. Baltas is a returning inmate to the Connecticut Department of Correction. He was previously incarcerated on an interstate compact in the Rhode Island Department of Correction from December 6, 2023, until his transfer to MacDougall Walker Correctional Institution, Walker Building on May 22, 2025. During his time in Rhode Island, Mr. Baltas accumulated a total of 93 adjudicated Disciplinary Reports (DR). His DRs ranged from Assaults on DOC Employees (3), to Threats (14), as well as an array of other infractions - including but not limited to Interfering with Safety and Security, Flagrant Disobedience, Contraband B, and False Reporting an Incident.

Mr. Baltas has been incarcerated in the Connecticut DOC since 2006, though not continuously, because of a series of placements out of state. In addition to the recent placement in Rhode Island, he has also been housed in Massachusetts and Virginia. He has amassed a total of 262 Disciplinary Reports.

Reason for Special Needs Placement and Behavior Management Plan

Mr. Baltas has demonstrated that he has difficulty integrating successfully into the general inmate population. He shows a pattern of defiance toward authority and rules-based behavior, and also a recurring pattern of violence toward staff members. An example of this antisocial behavior pattern is as follows: while housed at Garner CI, he utilized a knife that he had fashioned to stab an officer in the neck. As a result of his assaults on staff, he has 14 staff-profiles in the CTDOC. He is currently housed in Walker CI RHU. A special needs placement is being requested from the MacDougall Walker CI administration to promote the safety of staff and other inmates and to safely manage Mr. Baltas in a structured and controlled manner. The rationale for such a placement is indicated by the serious nature of his violent history, both in the community and while in DOC custody.

Background Information

Mr. Baltas is a 37-year-old Caucasian male. He is serving a sentence for Felony Murder and is serving a 95-year sentence. Along with this sentence, the inmate faces additional charges for his multiple staff assaults, with a bond of 1.4 million.

His developmental and psychological history indicates an early pattern of defiance of authority and aggression with peers and adults. From a young age, he was involved in mental health treatment – outpatient, inpatient, and residential. He is currently classified at an MH 2 level of care, and therefore is not engaged in regular behavioral health treatment; instead, accessing care on an as-needed basis. On the one hand, Mr. Baltas has endorsed experiencing feelings of anxiety and unhappiness. On the other hand, he has also voiced a general mistrust of mental health staff and shown an ambivalence toward mental health services. His pattern was to engage at times, but then reject services, and he seemed to view behavioral health services at times as pointless.

Behaviors and/or Management Issues Preventing Successful Integration

Over the years, Mr. Baltas has struggled with managing his violent impulses and thoughts and tendencies toward dealing with interpersonal issues by resorting to violent responses.

Goals for the monthly review of Special Needs Placement

Mr. Baltas' programming needs will be determined in accordance with his OAP. In addition, the following goals will be completed before the facility administration recommends that Mr. Baltas be reviewed for removal from Special Needs Management Status.

1. Mr. Baltas will not engage in any behavior that jeopardizes the safety, security, and orderly operations of the facility. Therefore, the plan seeks to decrease the likelihood of repeated patterns of behavioral impulsivity, violence, and aggression.
2. Mr. Baltas will not engage in any maladaptive behavior that would result in placement on Behavioral Observation Status (BOS) or Disciplinary Reports (DRs). On a monthly basis, custody administration and mental health will review and evaluate the inmate's progress towards these goals.
3. Mr. Baltas will not receive any Disciplinary Reports. Implicit in this goal is the expectation of prosocial behavior toward other inmates and staff, including Operational and Health Services staff. In other words, Mr. Baltas will engage in behaviors such as cooperation with staff, use verbal communication and problem solving without resorting to threats or intimidation, and verbal communication and problem solving instead of acts of violence or aggression, and show patience and restraint when issues, differences, and conflicts arise. Another important behavioral marker of progress will be his use of recreation or out-of-cell time. Within the parameters of the time allotted to him for out-of-cell activities, Mr. Baltas will utilize the RHU dayroom or the recreation yard for out-of-cell activities.
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5. When mental health services or interventions are needed, Mr. Baltas will genuinely engage with behavioral health staff and treatment providers.
6. These DOC programs are required to be completed for Mr. Baltas to progress:
 - a. New Thoughts
 - b. Anger Management
 - c. Domestic Violence

Following completion of the identified DOC programs and then 4 consecutive months of sustained goal achievement in the above identified areas, Mr. Baltas will be eligible for review for possible removal of Special Needs status.

Behavior Plan Interventions:

1. Mr. Baltas will be managed in the Walker Building in Restrictive Housing or B-Pod, allowing for a highly structured and controlled environment. Currently, this individual is being managed by two officers and one supervisor for all out-of-cell movement.
2. During his time in Special Needs, Mr. Baltas will have access to property items that are allowable according to the terms of this management status. Worth noting that access to his property seems to be a means with which Mr. Baltas can more successfully self-regulate.
3. Upon completion of the recommended programs, there will be a review of his progress and level of goal attainment. The time frame for this more general review will be 6 months from completion of recommended programming.

Custody Management Plan

The custody management plan for inmate Mr. Baltas is in accordance with Special Needs provisions and management standards. Restraints status shall remain in effect while classified on special needs.

All Movement Out of the Cell within the assigned housing unit.	All escorts outside of the cell within the assigned housing unit shall require inmate Baltas to be handcuffed behind the back. At a minimum of two (2) staff members and a supervisor present. A strip search must be conducted before exiting the cell.
Movement out of the Unit other than to the adjacent Recreation Area	All escorts outside of the unit shall require inmate Baltas to be handcuffed behind the back with leg irons and a tether chain. A minimum of two (2) staff members and a supervisor shall be present at all times during the escort. A strip search must be conducted before exiting the cell.
In Cell Observation	Direct observation by a correctional officer, not less frequently than every 15 minutes.
Cell Searches	The assigned cell will be searched at a minimum of three (3) times every seven (7) days or when warranted.
Showers	Showers will be provided daily during the inside recreation period only and while on normal operations. Should the facility have modified operations for any reason, a shower will be provided once the facility has returned to normal operations.
Food Service	Regularly scheduled meal inside the cell.
Out of Cell Time	Four (4) hours daily.
Programs	All program opportunities will be provided for in-cell participation. Counseling programs shall be available.
Inmate Property	Allowed to retain four (4) cubic feet of property. At a maximum of two (2) cubic feet of legal paperwork can be stored in facility-provided boxes. Allotment of property items shall be in accordance with the inmate-specific property matrix of the current facility where the inmate is housed.
Visits	Three (3) 1-hour non-contact visits or Three (3) 45-minute video visits per week, only with immediate family. Legal visits as needed and approved by the Unit Administrator or designee.

Mail Retention	May send and receive mail, same as the general population, but may retain only five (5) letters in the cell.
Telephone Usage	Three (3) 15-minute calls per week, except legal telephone calls as approved by a supervisor/counselor.
Television	Yes
Tablet	Permitted while compliant with Administrative 9.5, Code of Penal Discipline. The tablet shall be removed from the inmate's property and possession whenever a Class A Disciplinary Report is issued. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If the Class A Disciplinary Report is adjudicated and the inmate is found guilty, then the tablet will NOT be reissued to the inmate for a minimum of 120 calendar days from the date that the disciplinary report was finalized. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This process shall occur each time the inmate receives a Class A Disciplinary Report and will extend the period when all provisions of this standard are met. o If the Class A Disciplinary report is dismissed, then the tablet shall be reissued to the inmate.
Radio in Cell	A small radio or CD player with radio will be allowed.
Commissary	\$75.00 per week
Religious Services	Facility Chaplains shall schedule, at a minimum, weekly visits if requested. Religious Visits shall occur during inside recreation hours and will be subject to all provisions associated with this Management Standard.

refused to sign

Inmate Baltas

Warden Guadarrama

Warden Guadarrama

Warden Whittingham

Deputy Warden Whittingham

Captain Ortega

Leonard Santarsiero, Ph.D.

Reviewed and Approved by:

Thomas Koclenda, Psy.D.

Mental Health Superintendent
CT Department of Correction

6/24/25

Date

6/24/2025

Date

6/20/25

Date

6/20/25

Date

6/20/25

Date

6/18/2025

Date