

1 of 5

To The Joint Committee On Judiciary,

First I would like to say that I truly appreciate your Committee in taking the time in not only reading and hearing my testimony, but also seeking to take action to better the confinements for staff at Doc and inmates.

To briefly introduce myself, my name is Joseph DeRaffaele. In three days I will be 45 yrs young. I am currently serving time because I have violated Connecticut law due to a substance abuse problem I have had. Thankfully that problem is being dealt with as I write this thanks to God Almighty.

Now the reason I am writing this testimony is due to the fact of things I have witnessed along with my personal experience. I am currently a sentenced level 2 non violent prisoner at Corrigan CC. I was admitted here in May of 2024. I was, upon admission, placed in C-Pod 101 cell. I was in that cell until November 2025. During my time in that cell, I went through hardships which I strongly believe could have been avoided if population management had been more vigilant as to

2 of 5

who they housed in that cell with me. The cell is meant to house two inmates at a time. Now keep in mind that I am, as I mentioned, a level 2 non violent prisoner with absolutely no disciplinary actions against me with zero tickets the entire time I have ever been incarcerated. This means I strive very hard to stay out of troubles way when I am serving time. So the reason I am saying this is because during my time in that cell, I have had many different cellmates. I am simply shocked though with ^{some of} populations managements decision to place some of the inmates in that cell with me. I would assume there would be some type of screening as to who lives with who. For example my last cellmate in C-pod 101. He ~~was~~^{is} a level 4 inmate with 89 disciplinary tickets who is serving time for man-slaughter. The very first night he moved in he started smoking k-2. He was having violent outbursts. He threatened me with violence and threw a chair at me because I asked for my headphones back because he was blasting rap music. He constantly was combative with the Correctional Officers. So because of this, I went to the Unit Counselor

3 of 5

and he told me to write a request to Lt. Hackett and express the problem at hand. I simply told him what he was doing and that I was afraid for my safety. I was almost in that cell for 2 years, and yet the decision was to move me to the orientation block which is A-Pod cell 118. This cell has no electric power. I say that because I currently have a TV, fan, hotpot, tablet w/charger, etc... It's like I was punished for voicing my concern. About a week goes by and I run into that same cellmate at medical. He threatens me saying that Lt. Hackett told him that my mother called the prison and told the Captain that he was bullying me and that is why I was moved. Sadly, this only added insult to injury. The nursing staff had to get in between him because he once again threatened to hurt me. Why would Lt. Hackett say that to him? Why is it that this cellmate, who is known to cause trouble, treated better even though he doesn't deserve it and I am being punished for expressing my concern for my safety? More than that, why are people

4 of 5

or inmates like that housed with inmates like me? Couldn't have this been prevented if some policy was ~~was~~ enforced that oversees who is housed with who in 2 man cells? Unfortunately, this was one of several times that I have experienced ^{that} in that cell. My hopes is that something can be put in place that oversees who lives with who.

My next concern is what I just recently witnessed. About 2-3 weeks ago there was a code orange called because this old man tried closing his door with a Correctional Officer near it. What I witnessed after, in my humble opinion, was an abuse of power or excessive force. The 70 year old man was not resisting at all. He kept saying "I don't understand, I don't understand." Because of that, he was ~~sprayed~~ pepper-sprayed in the eyes close up and stomped on by Officers. He kept saying "I don't understand." The Lt on duty said, and I quote verbatim "Shut up or I am going to stomp on your head" He said that many times. However, as soon as the video camera came on as they began to escort him, That same Lt did not say a word. And why should he, the recorder was on and he knew

5 of 5

that was wrong, unprofessional, and ~~and~~ against the written code. After they left with that old man, certain ~~the~~ inmates kept mocking that Lt and shouting "I'm going to stomp on your head if you don't shut up". I felt bad for that old man. He almost went unconscious as they dragged him off. Was all that force necessary to detain him? I say this because I am hoping that the Officers here begin wearing body-cams. This way things in the DOC could run smoother with less incidents occurring. Wouldn't you agree? If policeman have to wear them, why not correctional officers also. I truly hope there can be positive changes which will, in my opinion, make the Department of Correction a safer place both for staff and inmates alike. Thank you for your time in reading this. Peace and Goodwill to you all.

Respectfully,

Joseph DeRaffaele

Inmate # 376709

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