

HOUSE BILL 31

By Cooper

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 41,
relative to solitary confinement.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 41, Chapter 21, Part 4, is amended by adding the following language as a new section:

(a) A physician shall examine an inmate placed in solitary confinement at least once every fifteen (15) days until the inmate is removed from solitary confinement. The physician must examine the inmate for injury, physical illness, and signs of serious mental illness. The correctional facility shall comply with the physician's treatment plan, including moving the inmate from solitary confinement if recommended by the examining physician.

(b) As used in this section:

(1) "Serious mental illness" means a substantial mental disorder that:

(A) Significantly impairs judgment, behavior, or capacity to recognize reality or cope with the ordinary demands of life; and

(B) Is manifested by substantial pain or disability, the status of being actively suicidal, or a severe cognitive disorder that results in significant functional impairment; and

(2) "Solitary confinement" means placement of an inmate alone in a locked room or cell that is separate from the general population of the correctional facility for a period of twenty-two (22) hours or more a day with severely restricted activity, movement, and social interaction.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.