



# District of Columbia Corrections Information Council (CIC) Bulletin January 30, 2016

It has been an exciting week for criminal justice reform, featuring a seminal US Supreme Court ruling, Presidential action for juveniles in confinement, and the release and response to the Colson Task Force Final Recommendations.

## Obama Bans Solitary Confinement for Juveniles

President Obama announced a [ban on the use of solitary confinement for juveniles](#) in federal corrections facilities. This ban applies to DC juveniles convicted as adults who are housed in DC. The President also issued rules limiting the use of solitary confinement for adults, including capping solitary confinement to 60 days for first-time offenses, banning its use for low-level infractions, expanding treatment for mentally ill, increasing time outside of solitary cells, and reducing the Special Management Unit (SMU) Program at [USP Lewisburg](#) from 18-24 months to 9-12 months.

The President adopted the [recommendations](#) made by the US Department of Justice after its review of restrictive housing. The CIC greatly supports the President's adoption of these recommendations to curb the use of solitary confinement in the federal corrections system, as it will positively affect the nearly 5,000 DC residents in federal custody.

## Montgomery v. Louisiana

On January 25, 2016, the US Supreme Court ruled in [Montgomery v. Louisiana](#) that its holding in [Miller v. Alabama](#), which banned mandatory sentences of life without parole for juveniles, is retroactive. This means that any juvenile sentenced to life without parole prior to *Miller* is eligible for review for parole or new sentencing. This ruling could affect as many as 1,500 people given life-without-parole sentences as juveniles. See, Robert Barnes, "Supreme Court: Life sentences on juveniles open for later reviews," Washington Post (Washington, DC), Jan. 25, 2016.

## Colson Task Force Final Recommendations Released

Also this week, the Colson Task Force released its final recommendations to reform the federal corrections system in its [report](#), "Transforming Prisons, Restoring Lives: Final Recommendations of the Charles Colson Task Force on Federal Corrections." The Colson Task Force stated that it has endeavored over the past year to "identify the drivers of prison population growth, supporting the development of policy recommendations designed to improve public safety, increase accountability of those in the criminal justice system, and reduce recidivism." The DC Reentry Task Force recognized in its Jan. 26, 2016 press release that these general recommendations did not take into account the unique challenges of DC residents in the Federal Bureau of Prisons system. The CIC will continue meet with leaders in the community, government, and corrections agencies about how to improve the conditions of confinement (including programming and reentry services) for District residents.

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*The Corrections Information Council (CIC) is an independent agency mandated to inspect, monitor, and report on the conditions of confinement at facilities where DC residents are incarcerated. This includes facilities operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons, the DC Department of Corrections, and private contract facilities. The CIC does not handle individual complaints, provide legal representation or provide legal advice.*