



Valley Interfaith Project

July 10, 2020

Director David Shinn
Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation, & Re-entry
1601 W Jefferson
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Delivered electronically

Dear Director Shinn,

Per our meeting this morning to continue the conversation surrounding coronavirus in the prisons, we believe that the state could be doing much more in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to hear from inmates about the stark difference of their experiences within the prisons and the changes that you have reported, thus far. We know that people are scared to death in the prisons. Inmates are aware that the sentence they are serving has now changed to death by virus.

The pace and scope of the response by ADCRR, DHS and this administration is bordering on too little, too late. Based on what has happened in other states like Ohio, California, Florida, Texas, Indiana and more, ADCRR is on the cusp of a cataclysmic slide into severe and lingering illnesses among those who recover from the virus and death for those who do not. There is a difference between having the ability to do something and actually doing it. The time for action is slipping through our fingers. Lives of staff, officers, and inmates are at stake. Lives within the communities where our prisons are located are at stake. We need action now, not in a week or so.

Our stridency in caring for and protecting the lives of people - including inmates, inmate families, corrections staff, and corrections officers - stems from commitments to care for the vulnerable. The gift of life is the most sacred and most precious gift received from our Creator, and we hope to protect that gift as we struggle for meaningful frameworks and plans that will suppress the novel coronavirus.

We will continue to keep communication open with you, and we look forward to the day that you can tell us that all of our requests have been implemented fully in the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation, and Reentry.

Respectfully,

Rev. Rock Fremont, Shepherd of the Hills UCC, Phoenix

The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Reddall, VI Bishop of The Episcopal Diocese of Arizona

Mary Permoda, St. Patrick's Catholic Community, Scottsdale

Rabbi John Linder, Temple Solel, Paradise Valley

The Rev. Hunter Ruffin, Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Tempe

The Rev. Kim Crecca, AZ Inmate Family & Friends Association

The Rev. Martha Seaman, President, Valley Interfaith Project

Joe Rubio, Arizona Interfaith Network

Jason Lowry, Valley Interfaith Project