

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 21, 2020

Mr. Michael Carvajal
Director
Federal Bureau of Prisons
320 First Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20534

Dear Mr. Carvajal:

We continue to be concerned about the growing outbreak of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) at the Lompoc United States Penitentiary (USP) and the response from the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) to mitigate this crisis. While we are grateful the BOP is moving forward with establishing a mobile hospital as we had requested, we are writing to you today to continue stressing the need for the BOP to move with urgency in establishing this facility with the necessary staff and equipment—including ventilators. Additionally, we are following up on our previous letter from April 15, 2020 to see what progress the BOP has made to ensure the safety and well-being of the law enforcement officers, staff, and inmates at the Lompoc USP.

It is our understanding the BOP is in negotiations to establish the mobile hospital. We urge you to move as quickly as possible to ensure our local healthcare system is not overwhelmed by this COVID-19 outbreak. As of April 18, 2020, data from Santa Barbara County shows that 81 inmates and 29 staff members have tested positive for COVID-19—almost double the total numbers from the previous week. Many of them have been taken to local hospitals within Santa Barbara County and one inmate from the Lompoc USP has died due to COVID-19. Additionally, there are reports that another inmate from the Lompoc USP was released while infected with COVID-19 and was not given treatment prior to his release.

We recently heard that Lompoc USP is still not receiving sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE). We are also troubled to hear the BOP has not implemented a plan to protect its correctional officers and staff, who are also being exposed to COVID-19. As we know based on information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic individuals can transmit this disease to others without showing any symptoms. As a result of this, many law enforcement personnel and other workers within the Lompoc USP are reportedly sleeping in their cars to avoid the potential transmission of the disease to their loved ones at home. These public servants continuously put their lives on the lines and deserve better.

Therefore, we request answers to the following questions:

1. Can you provide clarity on the expected timeframe for the BOP to establish the mobile hospital at the Lompoc USP? What progress has the BOP made to secure the necessary staff and equipment, including ventilators for this mobile hospital?
2. How has the BOP worked with other stakeholders to develop a contingency plan to ensure our local resources are not overwhelmed by this crisis, such as supplementing needed equipment?
3. When can law enforcement personnel, workers and all other individuals at the Lompoc USP expect to receive PPE? What types of PPE are they provided, as well as how often? What is the current demand for PPE and when is the BOP expected to meet this need?
4. On April 3, Attorney General Barr issued a memo requiring that every inmate cleared for release be quarantined for 14 days. What plans has the BOP developed to follow this guidance? Was this followed in the case of the reported inmate who died of COVID-19 four days after his release? If inmates are showing symptoms of COVID-19 and are expected to be released, how is the BOP ensuring they receive proper treatment prior to their release to make sure the virus does not continue to propagate outside of the prison?
5. How has the BOP worked with its employees to develop a plan for alternative housing or procedures to ensure the safety of their families and community members from continued exposure to COVID-19?

Thank you and we look forward to your timely response to these critical issues.

Sincerely,

The image shows three handwritten signatures in blue ink. From left to right: 1) Salud Carbajal's signature, which is cursive and appears to read "SALUD CARBAJAL". 2) Kamala D. Harris' signature, which is more stylized and appears to read "Kamala D. Harris". 3) Dianne Feinstein's signature, which is cursive and appears to read "Dianne Feinstein".

SALUD CARBAJAL
Member of Congress

KAMALA D. HARRIS
United States Senator

DIANNE FEINSTEIN
United States Senator