

October 22, 2013

Mr. Charles E. Samuels, Jr.
Director
Federal Bureau of Prisons
320 First St., NW
Washington, DC 20534

RE: October 1 Meeting with Advocates

Dear Director Samuels:

Thank you for meeting with us recently to discuss a number of issues regarding the Federal Bureau of Prisons. We know your time is valuable, and we appreciated the opportunity to hear from you and to raise our concerns. We share your goal of reducing the number of people incarcerated in federal prisons.

As we mentioned at our meeting, we urge the Bureau to take full advantage of recent expansions to the compassionate release policy, including those announced by Attorney General Holder on August 12, to identify all worthy cases that meet the outlined criteria. We support your commitment to send a letter to inmates to inform them about changes to the policy.

We also appreciate your efforts to expand the Residential Drug Abuse Program and make it accessible to Spanish speakers. We share your goal of ensuring that all who qualify for the program have an opportunity to participate and to receive a full 12-month sentence reduction.

You mentioned in the meeting that the Bureau has reduced the number of people in segregation by over 25%. This is heartening information. We would like to hear how the Bureau plans to continue to evaluate and reduce its use of prolonged segregation in its facilities.

We also look forward to receiving more information on the Bureau's plan to repurpose Danbury FCI and about any potential transfers of female detainees who have immediate family in the near vicinity.

You mentioned in our conversation that of the 30,000 people held in private prisons for the Bureau, 22,000 are immigration offenders. Could you clarify how many of those 22,000 were convicted of illegal entry or reentry and how many are noncitizens who were convicted of another felony?

Thank you again for your time, leadership, and continued work to ensure a fair and effective federal prison system. We are encouraged by your commitment to the number of issues we discussed, and we hope that you would consider meeting with us in six months to continue our productive conversation. If you have questions, or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Jeremy Haile at The Sentencing Project at 202-628-0871 or jhaile@sentencingproject.org.

Sincerely,

American Bar Association
American Civil Liberties Union
Brennan Center for Justice
Drug Policy Alliance
Human Rights Watch
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
Open Society Policy Center
The Sentencing Project