

October 26, 2012

Arizona Prison Watch
Attn: Margaret J. Plews
PO Box 20494
Phoenix, Arizona 85036

Dear Ms. Plews,

Hi! I received your contact information from other another person on my unit. I really appreciate the time and effort that you are taking in which to help all of us. I wish that more people could see the cruel and inhuman way that they treat us and actually care and not just figure we deserve this for committing our crimes. Regardless to the crimes in which has lead each of us into prison we are still human beings and thus should be treated as such. I plan on fighting for prison reform once I am out. I would love to run for Legislature or even Congress but I am pretty sure being a convicted felon will eliminate this for me. Why I am not sure since most of the Politian's in office are criminals just haven't been caught.

It is coming upon my two year mark her. I was sentenced to ten years for a Theft Class 2 crime out of Mohave County. I was blown away with the amount of time and in fact appealing my judge's decision. My judge was a very biased man and used me as an example to show both Maricopa County and Pima County how to sentence criminals. He had already come to his decision with regards to my sentence prior to even hearing my defense. I am in the second phase of my appeal and have every hope that I will win and either be afforded probation or at the very least the minimum of my plea which was three years within DOC. I have the loving support of my wonderful husband as well as the rest of my family and friends who are standing behind me all the way.

As you are aware there a lot of things wrong within the prison system. I myself have been fighting for almost a year now in order to receive an eye exam. I have been scheduled twice for a nurse consultation and then told to be patient while I wait for the doctor. I watch in amazement while others put in HNR's after me get seen as well as pick up their glasses and I still wait. I have had my family call daily to the prison as well as Wexford Health and have still received now relief. Wexford blames DOC and DOC blames Wexford.

I have a very high prescription as well as a stigmatism in my right eye. The high prescription causes me to have floaters and migraines. I have been told by my ophthalmologist (prior to coming into prison) that I need to have these monitored to ensure that my retina is not tearing away from my cornea. For the protection of my cornea and to avoid eye strain I was told I would need to wear contacts which I always had prior to coming into prison. I was scheduled to have the corrective laser eye surgery to correct my vision which would have eliminated all my current problems however, that has been put on hold until I am out. I have explained to both the doctor for my migraines and the nurse I have seen to get an eye exam that if I could just receive a new prescription for my eye wear as well as be approved for my contacts that this

would eliminate my migraines. I have had my medical records from my outside ophthalmologist be forwarded as well as had him call but yet they still refuse to do anything for me. In August of this year the right side of my ear piece broke, and now I pretty much suffer with daily headaches that sometimes lead me to intense migraines.

During the summer months we begged and pleaded with DOC staff to have the hotter water on the Unit turned off (or even down). We put repair orders after repair orders after 18 yard went from five phones to 2 phones. Then in the first part of August the computer system which would allow AB control to open the doors with a switch went out and A and B pod had to be keyed open when the doors needed open. To me this was a safety issue for those of us in those pods. We finally gave up going through prison officials and some of us took it upon ourselves to write to the Governor seeking her assistance. We all addressed many concerns with her including the current medical issues that have been ongoing from what I can gather for a long time within the letters to her. She merely took the letters that we sent to her and sent copies of them to the prison. Upon receipt of these letters we each were called into the DW offices asking what we accepted to have accomplished by writing the letters. He then tried to explain that everything had a chain of command in which things had to follow and that we must always go through the proper channels in order to receive the results that we were looking for. Yes, we did explain to him that we did, however, have gotten absolutely no results. DW Anthony Coleman then expressed that he was genuinely concerned with the welfare of all the inmates within the prison system and that he was doing that entire he could do.

I can say that after writing the letters to her the hot water was turned down, the phones were fixed as well as the switch to allow AB control to access A and B pods was fixed. All of this happened within three day. However as the weather started turning cooler and we began to ask for the hot water back on we were told that since we wrote to the Governor asking for it to be turned off that they would be leaving it off permanently. We once again started having our family call to the prison and finally after about a week the hot water was turned on after family members threatened to back to the governor again.

We were told that the mixer valve that would allow the Santa Cruz unit to have both hot and cold water all the time is broken. DW Anthony Coleman told us that he had ordered the part but that when it came in that another unit needed to borrow it in order to get hot water to their kitchen. This does not make sense to me how the units are able to mix budgets. Why didn't that unit have to order their own? As of the date of the writing of this letter we are still waiting for the mixer valve and will probably never really get it.

Most of the showers on the units have water that stand in them and mold in them. Half of them will stay running even when you turn the shower off. Some of them have half shower curtains thus not offering any sort of privacy while we shower. The Santa Cruz unit is not a dorm style and is in fact housed with two inmates per cell. So when we go to the showers they are basically outside in either hot or cold temperatures.

Now to my amazement (which to be honest shouldn't surprise me) they have decided to make to make an actual running/walking track. They have paid to have the curbing machine fixed in order to pour cement and then add gravel rock in between the curbing. What about all the other repairs that should come and be considered more important than curbing? We do not have the budget to fix the things currently wrong with the unit but yet it is in the budget to build a track???

Currently over 75% of the Santa Cruz unit has plastic bags secured with tape to keep dirt and bugs out of the room. The windows do not seal or close and we have been told that they will be welded closed. However now we are told that by welding them closed that this will pose as a safety issue and eliminate the air flow for the swamp coolers in the summer months. Most of the rooms have mold and peeling paint in them. Some even have shrubbery growing in them.

I have a question that maybe you can look into for me. On the weekend we are only fed twice a day. They begin feeding us at 7:00 am and finish about 9:00 and then the evening meal begins at 5:00 pm and usually ends about 7:00 pm. How is this possible or even healthy? Yes we can purchase food from the store but what about the people that do not have money to do this? They have to go eight hours until another meal? It was explained to me that feeding was changed due to budget cuts and that the two meals used to be bigger. We also are supposed to get juice daily according to the menu. However it is actually sugar free Kool-Aid. The menu calls for salad and in reality all that is lettuce or cabbage with either Italian or Caitlin dressing poured on it.

I am told that while Janet Napolitano was the Governor for Arizona she appointed Doreen Shaffer as the Director for the Arizona Department of Corrections. I am told that while Ms. Shaffer was in office she had started to build more compassion towards both the female and male population. She was working on gaining the necessary programs in place that would offer rehabilitation services for us. She was interested in working on ways to ensure that we did not return to prison and in fact had an opportunity in which to better ourselves.

However, when Janet Napolitano left office in order to work for the current President, Jan Brewer was appointed in her place. At that time she let Doreen Shaffer go and brought back Charles "Chuck" Ryan. Mr. Ryan has gone back to the old ways of the prison and has taken and is still continually to take programs out of the prison that would be of a benefit to us. Mr. Ryan is not interested in rehabilitating us. We are seen only as a means for the state to collect money.

The money the Federal Government designates to go to the prison system does not all make it to us. Governor Brewer determines how much she feels that the prison should receive and then use the additional funds for other things.

When the women's prison failed the mandated inspection three times and was ordered to make some necessary changes or they would be forced to condemn the prison which in my opinion should happen anyways. They opted to try and pull a fast one on the legislature in order to get them to okay the building of a new women's' prison. The legislature saw through them after Mr. Ryan appeared on Channel 5 news stating that the prison was not broke. They suggest to either make the necessary repairs or to start releasing the inmates. After all while we have been incarcerated the prison has had enough time to rehabilitate us and we should no

longer be a threat to society. Needless to say that did not happen, because the state can not afford to let any of us out as they would lose the money they receive for us.

They currently collect a 1% building fee from any monies that is put unto our books. I myself have to also pay an additional 35% of my check every two week to go toward room and board. I am one of the lucky ones who have a decent paying job in prison. We also have to pay \$2.00 a month for electricity if you own any appliances that you have to plug in (example stinger, fan, and lamp). However, I am unable to leave my fan on if I am not in the room.

More of the population would be open to speaking with you but fear retaliation of some sort. I on the other hand have decided to just take a stand because nothing is going to change otherwise. I am here in prison for taking funds that did not belong to me. But yet the Governor and as well as prison administration do the same thing daily. I think that it is time that they are held accountable for there actions just like normal everyday citizens are.

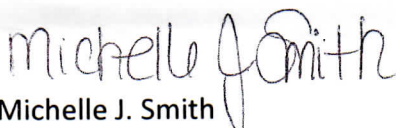
Arizona is the only state in which inmates must do a minimum of 85% of their time in order to go home. Arizona has talked about changing this amount to either 65% or 66% but with the current people in office this will never happen unless they are forced to do this like in California.

Any assistance that you can offer to us would be greatly appreciated. Yes I am fully aware that we are criminals and housed within the prison system for consequences for our actions. However, we are all still human beings and should be treated as such. They way they treat us only causes more harm than good.

I do not understand why we have a clemency board that approves those they feel are ready to be released. Only to have Governor Brewer deny them. From what I understand other states do not have the Governor approve or deny clemency it is handled with the board.

I am willing to do whatever I can to help while in prison. I have given your contact information to my family and friends as well. What really needs to happen is the Federal Government needs to show up hear unannounced and inspect every unit. They need to give absolutely no notice to DOC to cover them time to cover up there wrong doings.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle J. Smith

DOC #260201 18B-234

Arizona State Prison Complex-Perryville

Unit: Santa Cruz

PO Box 3200

Goodyear, Arizona 85395