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In Memory Of:

Felmers O. Chaney
(1918 – 2012)

FELMERS O. CHANEY
ADVOCACY BOARD
6373 N. 106th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53225
Tel: (262) 255-4015
Fax: (262) 255-4019
January 12, 2024

Governor Tony Evers
115 East
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Evers,

We are calling on you to act immediately to protect the lives of the people impacted by prisons and jails in Wisconsin. As you know, the spread of COVID-19 is a national emergency that threatens thousands of lives across our country. According to the latest estimates, the death toll from this virus could range anywhere from 200,000 to more than one million people in the United States alone. While everyone is at risk, we have a moral obligation to ensure that our most vulnerable—the elderly, the sick, those without medical care, and those unable to protect themselves from the virus—get the help they need. We have a further obligation to our community to keep the people whose job it is to work in jails and prisons, and their communities, safe.

Please review the document titled [Recommended Strategies for Sheriffs and Jails to Respond to the COVID-19 Crisis](#) dated March 20, 2020. It was authored by Michele Deitch, an expert regarding prison policy, at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin which is dated March 20, 2020. It is a comprehensive list of recommended strategies for sheriffs and jails to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. These strategies must be enacted in all Wisconsin jails and prisons including prisons and detention centers holding Wisconsin youth.

The [National Network of Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils](#) (NNCJCC) and the Justice Management Institute has also gathered information on the [response to COVID-19 by Criminal Justice Systems](#) which are being implemented by state, city, and county justice agencies including law enforcement, courts, and prisons. It includes resources and guidance from various national organizations as well.

Tyler Winkelman, a doctor and researcher at the University of Minnesota focused on health care and criminal justice said. “If Covid spreads in a large, thousand-person facility, and [within five days](#) you have a thousand people with multiple chronic conditions who just got the virus that has the potential to really overwhelm a health care system.” Winkelman pointed to [recent guidance](#) by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs to be adopted by other states.

We know how seriously you take your duty to protect the lives of people living and working in our prisons and jails and the surrounding communities. The health, well-being and indeed the lives of these people are in your hands. We urge you to take immediate and decisive action now to save lives. We will support you in taking the bold, but necessary, action now to protect the health of people in our community, including the most vulnerable. We must not wait. The window to act is closing soon.

Respectfully on behalf of the Felmers O. Chaney Advocacy Board,

Wendy Volz Daniels

Wendy Volz Daniels, MSW, LCSW
Felmers O. Chaney Advocacy Board
Cell: (920) 948-1855
Email: wvolzdan@gmail.com

CC: Secretary Kevin Carr
Rep. Evan Goyke

“Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are” – Benjamin Franklin“

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”
–Margaret Mead*

Website: <https://www.fcab-mke.org>