

Mr. Angel Quiros
Connecticut Department of Corrections
24 Wolcott Hill Road
Wethersfield, CT 06109

Dear Acting Commissioner Quiros:

Congratulations on your appointment to serve as Commissioner of the Connecticut State Department of Correction.

The ACLU Connecticut Campaign for Smart Justice is grounded in the knowledge that the people closest to the problem are closest to the solution. We are an unprecedented cohort of advocates who have been directly impacted by Connecticut's justice system.ⁱ We believe that Connecticut will be safer and stronger where every person, from every background, is treated fairly by the criminal legal system. We are working to usher in a new era of justice, and we are not alone. We are part of the nationwide Campaign for Smart Justice, a multiyear effort in all 50 states.



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While the Department of Correction Commissioner's role is not an elected position, this public position has the power to protect the well-being of incarcerated and community supervised Connecticut residents. This is an extraordinary time for Connecticut as the COVID-19 pandemic has touched every aspect of daily life. The ACLU Smart Justice Campaign recognizes the danger posed by COVID-19, including to Department of Correction (DOC) staff and people in custody, who have been among the most vulnerable during this public health crisis.

The DOC is in a historic moment, which obviates the need for decarceration and racial justice. The DOC is approaching a 50 percent reduction in its prison population since its peak, affording it the opportunity to close multiple prison facilities. Despite these overall reductions, there is a growing racial disparity in Connecticut's prison population, which is now 71 percent Black or Latino, requiring a reevaluation of release practices and prioritization of release practices that center racial equity. The COVID-19 pandemic's threat to incarcerated people's lives and health necessitates the DOC finding new ways to safely and flexibly release people from its prison facilities. And the persistent housing stability crisis for people exiting the DOC system, which existed before COVID-19, remains.

These are significant challenges that we would like to discuss with you, Acting Commissioner Quiros. Please consider this letter an official invitation for you to meet with the ACLU Smart Justice Campaign to discuss the issues listed above, as well as the agency's continued responsibility to prioritize the well-being of incarcerated people, to treat them with human decency and respect, and to prepare them for successful reentry to the community.

We would like to set a time and date for the month of October for our requested meeting. Please provide a response to our meeting request by October 1st to Claudine Fox, Campaign Manager, at 860-461-8477 or cfox@acluct.org.

Respectfully,

Anderson Curtis
Field Organizer
ACLU Connecticut Campaign for Smart Justice

Gus Marks-Hamilton
Field Organizer
ACLU Connecticut Campaign for Smart Justice

The American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut is a nonpartisan, non-profit membership organization that defends, promotes and preserves individual rights and liberties under the U.S. and Connecticut constitutions in state and federal court, the General Assembly and the state's 169 towns and cities.

ⁱ To learn more about the ACLU's Smart Justice Campaign visit: <https://www.acluct.org/en/issues/smart-justice>



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