

I just finished listening to the committee hearing on vaccines. Every member of the public that spoke told first accounts of the lack of safety for AICs. Stories about the absolutely cruel and inhumane conditions that they are living in and the complete neglect and endangerment of their lives from COs. The medical director and correctional director spoke nothing of the current conditions and instead heaped on praise for the COs or ate up time with unrelated backstory. The committee didn't ask a single question, didn't push back at all despite the first hand testimonies of the abuse that's happening in Oregon's correctional facilities and instead joined in the back patting for the COs.

People are dying in prison because of their neglect by the very people that sat before you today. COs are not wearing masks, they are not following protocols, they are not providing adequate PPE or sanitation. This has been detailed in hundreds of letters we've received from institutions all over the state.

Here is another story that betrays the true conditions of surviving in our States' care.

"The guy who was two cells down from me, his test came back positive so they shipped him off to coffee creek. As the nurse was walking by I ask her 'can I have please have a test?' She asks if I have symptoms and I said 'well, I kind of do, I have a little bit of a cough and a sore throat, but it's not too bad, but I'm in close proximity to somebody who just tested positive, I feel like it would be a good idea to get a test. She gave me a real sarcastic attitude and left.

Another nurse comes by with the same mentality and threatens to lock me down for being a nuisance. The next day, my cellie started getting symptoms, they have a lot of medical vulnerabilities. One of the big issues that he noticed that really caught my attention is that he lost his sense of taste, which is a big covid sign.

At this point, I'm working in the kitchen. I am a grill cook and I serve food. And I go to work, and in the morning they're supposed to take your temperature and ask if you have symptoms. I tell them I have symptoms AND my cellie has more advanced symptoms so it's a good change that I have covid. I told them I notified medical but **they didn't do anything about it**. They said, "Fine, but you still have to work" and they made me cook and serve food. The same thing happened the next day. I told them " Look, I have symptoms, I don't feel comfortable doing this job" They forced me to work. That day I grilled a **third of the food for the entire prison** and the whole time I was telling them " **I believe I might have covid, I don't feel comfortable with this**"

The next day, my taste and sense of smell went out and at that point I got a test. They left us still in our cells. At this point I'm coughing and sneezing almost constantly. Everyone in a 3 cell distance from me probably got covid. The next day I go to work and tell them "I can't go to work, I wont go to work. I'm sick and I'm waiting for my covid test to come back".

This time he's taken seriously and moved to quarantine to await his test results.

He continues talking about how he is extremely ill, he feels as if a spike has been driven through his head and how he can barely breath yet he is receiving **no medical care whatsoever**.

This person has 5 ½ months to their release date.

As you can see from this letter, the dangers that prisoners are facing extends far beyond covid19. These institutions have neither the ability nor the will to protect the lives of people in their custody. The neglect, hostility and active endangerment to prisoners lives is foundational to the prison system at large. A vaccine will not change that fact. Mass release is the only humane response.