

Sat 21/03/2020 19:06

REDACTED

COVID 19 letting prisoners out early

Central Enquiry Unit CEU@gov.scot

As an NHS worker used to dealing with prisonciers I can't see why they need to be let out early. Surely they are safer inside in isolation from the community. Letting hundreds or thousands of irresponsible people out into the community is stupid. Surely the prison officers can keep their distance (they are the most likely source of any infection if visiting is stopped.
REDACTED

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Mon 23/03/2020 11:22

REDACTED

F.A.O.Mr Humza Yousaf MSP, Ms.Nicola Sturgeon MSP Mr John Swinney MSP -
Prisoner release due to Covid 19?
Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Dear Ministers,

I am writing in the hope that you will be taking prompt action to release (some) prisoners due to the risk to both staff and prisoners posed by the Coronavirus pandemic.

I am not suggesting that prisoners who pose a violent threat be released, nor those whose crimes have been at the expense of vulnerable groups such as elderly people who are already falling prey to opportunistic criminals since the outbreak. I am merely requesting that a common-sense approach be applied immediately. There are many obvious candidates for immediate release (upon receiving a negative Covid19 test result). As an example, I would suggest non-violent drug offenders be considered although I am reticent to equate a de facto tendrill of a Mexican drug cartel with some dafty who grew a few plants in his loft.

Our humanity dictates the use of common sense. The sooner these measures happen(in the most obvious cases), the better the outcome. The sooner meaningful social distancing be implemented for prisoners and staff, the better. I only ask that you take your duty of care seriously, both to prison staff and prisoners. I trust you are consulting with the prison staff and management themselves to this end.

Technically, no part of any prison sentence includes being deliberately exposed to increased risk of disease; therefore, steps must be taken to mitigate these risks for prisoners and staff. The psychological burden must be very significant, the stress of which will diminish the proper functioning of the immune systems of those at highest risk.

I do not have the expertise to decide who should be let out of prison because of these exceptional circumstances, but I'm not an idiot either. Idiocy would be to let the situation worsen to a point where infections are allowed to increase unnecessarily (because no action had been taken), and the prospect of widespread prison violence becomes all but inevitable.

There are, of course, extremes of consequence possible (probable) between releasing Prisoner A or Prisoner B, but there are prisoners who would pose little more threat to society than the average person were they to be released immediately. I ask that you make this differentiation so that pressure on the system, the suffering of those within it, and the number of unnecessary cases of, and deaths resulting from Covid19 may be minimised.

If we are unable to extend empathy and compassion under extreme circumstances to those who have made mistakes, if we don't do all we can to protect those who risk their lives daily to protect us, then I wonder if there is much hope at all?

I want to thank you all for your efforts, I do not envy the many difficult choices you have to make. I hope you and your loved ones are all well.

I am not advocating for any individual and do not know anyone in prison who meet the criteria outlined in this email.

Sincerely

REDACTED

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Mon 23/03/2020 10:44

REDACTED

HMP Kilmarnock

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Good morning Humza Yousaf

I'm sure you have been very busy with your emails regarding prisoners in prisons with COVID-19, I'm emailing as a worried partner & mother to young children. My partner was sentenced to REDACTED months on the REDACTED first time offence, clean social work report and never stepped out of line, sadly got himself into a situation out with his control and REDACTED and that's why he's ended up where he is. I was pregnant when he was sentenced REDACTED then was made aware of 2 prisoners isolating but not confirmed yet well as we now know those cases have been confirmed and there is a possible 28 more isolating. I try speak to my partner daily and it's becoming more worrying as more and more people are coughing. The haven't received cell cleaning kits yet not to mention staff are at risk. I'm very high risk due to having REDACTED and I'm now REDACTED . REDACTED and I feel like my world has been ripped apart and I've no help. He has been told he will be eligible for the tag on the REDACTED is there any way this can be brought forward, he's an only child and both his parents are REDACTED with serious health conditions I can't even help them or be around them so I'm asking for help. I'm at a lose end and I understand he's done wrong and has to be punished but at the moment we are all being punished and our family is very much at risk. I have been following numerous prison services on twitter and the news ect and I am aware Kenny MacKskill is going to make a statement on Tuesday regarding prisoners with 3 months or less of a sentence to be realised what I'm asking is will he be eligible for this.

Thank you
REDACTED

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From: REDACTED

Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 1:04:53 PM

To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Early release for prisoners

I have never contacted an MP or anyone connected to government before, but I am outraged to read that you are considering the early release of prisoners "in the best interests of keeping establishments safe" - what about keeping the general public safe???

These criminals are in prison for a reason, in the widest sense, because they have failed to abide by the laws of the land. If released now, it is highly likely they will not socially isolate, and may well take advantage of the current crisis to commit further crime, knowing that police resources are already stretched.

A much better course of action would be to keep these criminals isolated in their cells, not release them onto the streets.

On a wider note, the whole criminal justice system is far too soft on these people who are incapable of adhering to the rules of a civilised society - they should be properly punished for crimes in order to have real deterrent - not just given a slap on the wrist,, or a stay in prison, which for some is more cushy than life outside.

Please bin this madcap early release idea immediately.

Yours, REDACTED

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From: Carol Monaghan <carol.monaghan.mp@parliament.uk>
Sent: 26 March 2020 11:31
To: Cabinet Secretary for Justice <CabSecJustice@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Fwd: Covid-19 (Case Ref: REDACTED)

Dear Humza,

Please see below an email I have received from my constituent, REDACTED regarding her concerns for her former partner and the father of her daughter, REDACTED who is currently an inmate in Barlinnie, REDACTED .

I note REDACTED concerns as REDACTED is in a vulnerable group and her hope that, in the current circumstances, he could be released on tag. I am aware that issues relating to prisoner safety are currently under review and I would welcome your comments on what measures are to be brought in for prisoners such as REDACTED.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,

Carol

Carol Monaghan MP

Constituency Office:
500 Dumbarton Road
Glasgow G11 6SL
Tel. 0141 337 2211

[Privacy Notice](#)

From: REDACTED
Sent: 25 March 2020 19:39
To: MONAGHAN, Carol
Subject: Fwd: Covid-19

Hello carol

I wonder if you can be of any assistance at all, please see email below. I am extremely worried for his health.

Kind regards

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: REDACTED
Date: 21 March 2020 at 19:43:41 GMT
To: "REDACTED"
Subject: Covid-19

Dear REDACTED

I write to you With regards to prisoner REDACTED . I write to you to plead for him to be released with a tag. With the ongoing covid 19 I am extremely worried for his general health as you are aware of this would have such a horrific impact on the prison. REDACTED I am genuinely worried for his well being. As stated he was REDACTED. I spoke to his lawyer who says normally it's six months before release date but please please consider this. I see that other countries have started to release prisoners. As your aware REDACTED falls in to the vulnerable group category and I have a wee girl waiting here at home who if god forbid anything happened she would be devastated. I am also worried if something drastic happened how long it would be for medical assistance to be sought as he has previously waited months REDACTED. That is in no way a dig at the Prison I know your filled to capacity and severely understaffed.

Thanks for reading!

Yours sincerely

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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REDACTED

Dear Sirs,

Our Client REDACTED
C/o HMP Cornton Vale
Date of Birth: REDACTED

We write on behalf of our client, REDACTED who is currently serving a custodial sentence in HMP Cornton Vale.

REDACTED

Her concern is multiplied due to this current epidemic the world is facing.

She is requesting that she be released early to be able to live at her parent's house so she can be "self isolating" REDACTED. It is her understanding that there are at least a couple of prisoners that are currently being monitored for Covid-19 at this present time.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

REDACTED

This message has been scanned by Mail Security from Euro Systems

Your Reference:
REDACTED

I know this is a long shot but I will do anything I can to help get my husband home and safe.....

My husband got sentenced to REDACTED in prison and is currently serving at HMP Kilmarnock where at the moment we know of 2 COVID 19 cases.

He has been moved down to a low cat and is REDACTED prison. He ain't a threat to the public nor in for any violent or sexual crime offence!

I'm looking for more information if available if my husband would be entitled to a tag due to the severity of COVID 19. I know he wouldn't usually be considered for anything like this until parole was granted. But under the circumstances and pressure Scotland prison service is under then I hope he would be considered.

I have read loads recently regarding this and it mention prisoners serving less than 4 year or nearing the end of there sentence. These prisoners already get the chance to apply for a tag and only serve half there sentence so I think it's only fair all prisoners on a low cat should be considered unless they poss any threat to the community which is totally understandable.

I Really hope use take my message into consideration because am a mother of two who desperately wants her husband home safe and well. And he has a family and house to come to home and will be welcome with open arms

Your Reference:

REDACTED

Hi I am writing in regards to my husband who is currently serving a sentence in hmp grampian Scotland, he has been REDACTED that he truly regrets after be taking away from our children for so long. I'm really concerned for him as he's locked up 23 hours of the day and when he does get out for food and to use the phone there's other prisoners and guards going about not keeping there distance. REDACTED, now that's been 4 weeks we haven't seen him and our REDACTED keeps asking when he's getting to see his dad, it's bad enough they've been taken out of school, not aloud to there activities, play with friends ect but now there not getting to see there dad. I see yous are considering letting some prisoners who have less than two month have early release. If you could consider helping prisoners/families which have young families, a stable home and regular family visits and the prison agree that there not a risk to public to be realeased temporary on electronic tag that would save a lot of children a lot of heart ache and a lot of dads mental healths being locked up and worrying about the virus and away from there families. I know it would save a lot of wives/partners a lot of worry aswell because the situation is horrible especially not being able to tell your children when there next going to see there dad. Least if there home temporary we know there safe. Obviously there in there for a reason and have to serve there time, but deserve to be with there families at times like this and should be considered for the electronic tag as we don't know how long this could go on for and children don't deserve to be kept away from there father's all this time.

Kind regards REDACTED

Sat 25/04/2020 03:33

REDACTED

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Hi was wondering about prisoners being released early. What if a long term prisoner is only got 1 and half years and they have turned there life around and not a danger to the public. Would they be considered for release. My sons in barlinnie and I'm worried sick about him. Please consider this option.

Many thanks

Take care and stay safe

From: Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP <Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>
Sent: 29 April 2020 09:02
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Subject: Fwd: REDACTED

Nicola Sturgeon MSP
Glasgow Southside
Constituency Office (constituent enquiries only)
Unit 3
Govanhill Workspace
69 Dixon Road
G42 8AT
Tel: 0141 424 1174
nicola.sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot

From: REDACTED
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 3:28:25 PM
To: Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP <Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: REDACTED
Date: 13 April 2020 at 11:56:05 BST
To: "Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot" <Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: REDACTED

REDACTED

Dear Nicola sturgeon

Following the prim minister Boris Johnston stating that consideration maybe given to for prisoners that's reaching the end of there sentences. I request that you consider REDACTED for the following reasons, one : REDACTED, reason why he's not moved on is the sps is backlogged REDACTED this is no fault of his own this is down to the sps. A four year window is put in place for lifers/ ltps and having this in place they can't not meet the four year window. Two: REDACTED has been a model prisoner REDACTED has participated in REDACTED. Three: REDACTED has been in prison from REDACTED during this time he has missed out on many experiences such as family weddings deaths and births. The world he will be released into a very different world, he is now mature enough to play an active part in society.He recently REDACTED. Four: REDACTED will be moving into a secure home with his long term girlfriend and their children whom he has took on as he's own. He hopes to become apart of a family unit financially and emotionally, REDACTED is coming into a stable family who was brought up in a stable family with high standards REDACTED. We have been brought up believing everyone deserves a second chance in life REDACTED ,I

don't condone what he has done but I learned to forgive and love him, I believe welcoming him into our family is given him the best chance. Five: REDACTED fully understands his actions he takes full responsibility and could never express the remorse he feels this is something REDACTED will carry this burden for the rest of his life.

Prison is in place to punish offenders and keep people safe it is also there to help rehabilitation as he is now REDACTED and a very different person from REDACTED with different values and a different outlook to life. REDACTED is willing to accept any conditions placed soon his release to help prove that he wishes to live in society in a proactive way as he now has a loving stable family for the first time in his life, I sincerely hope this request is considered and for me to have a reply in due course also stating why it is not considered and what else could be done to help prove his rehabilitation for his release.

Yours sincerely

REDACTED

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From: REDACTED
Sent: 26 April 2020 13:29
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Letter from your constituent REDACTED

REDACTED

Sunday 26 April 2020

Dear Humza Yousaf,

Christine Graham MSP is my local representative.

I am very concerned about the release of prisoners from Scottish Prisons. Both my husband and I are REDACTED respect the law of the land. We are self isolating, getting a daily walk and respecting social distancing. There are many people living on their own without any physical contact which could go on for many weeks or months, it's hard, but to stay healthy and alive we must abide by those rules. It just needs the released prisoners not to respect the rules laid down, for us to have an second upsurge of Covid-19 . That will have a drastic effect on the health service and economy. I hope that plans are afoot to check that those prisoners are respecting the lockdown rules?

Yours sincerely,

REDACTED

(Signed with an electronic signature in accordance with section 7(3) of the Electronic Communications Act 2000.)

[This message was sent by WriteToThem.com. If you have had any problems receiving this message, please email support@writetothem.com and we'll get back to you. See REDACTED for more details about the service. We have sent this email to Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot; if this address is out of date please email us so that we can update our records.]

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From: REDACTED

Sent: 06 May 2020 17:50

To: Public Engagement Unit <CorrespondenceUnit@gov.scot>

Subject: Re: Your recent correspondence with Scottish Government and partner agencies – REDACTED

My husband is a lifer and he got REDACTED and REDACTED but with this going off he can not able progress and he is already REDACTED behind I would like u to please look into if u can to see if there is any chance of early realise till this is controlled putting him on a electronic tag he is a low risk and had passed up at the board ... I'm a front line worker and have had all my checks and fear for my husband safety in the jail as it's over crowded and the living conditions is shocking my husband details below hope to hear from u soon

REDACTED

Hmp

Barlinnie

81 lee avenue

Glasgow

Thu 26/03/2020 14:31

REDACTED

Scottish Prisoners

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Good afternoon, I am writing to ask that we get more information in regards to our partners in Scottish prisons, we are hearing of things happening in England and Wales and are in limbo at the moment in regards to scotland. My partner is a low category prisoner who was sentenced to REDACTED, he was due to be released on the home detention curfew from the REDACTED, his application has not been sent to the social work department and has been sat with the governor for weeks now. I understand this is a difficult time but he is amongst other prisoners with symptoms of this virus, he is allowed out for 5 minutes a day and has the option of a shower or a phone call and is locked up the rest of the day. Many other people are in this position and feel we are not being told enough. I am trying anything I can to get help and advice from anyone who will listen to me. Thank you for your time and hope to hear from you soon. Kind regards REDACTED.

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From:

[FirstMinisterWebsite@gov.scot][SMTP:FIRSTMINISTERWEBSITE@GOV.SCOT]

Sent: 24 March 2020 14:08:13

To: First Ministers Website Mailbox

Subject: Prisoners in HMP Grampian

Auto forwarded by a Rule

From: REDACTED

Subject: Prisoners in HMP Grampian

Message Body:

My wife is currently serving a sentence in hmp Grampian. REDACTED

She is a REDACTED

As of 23rd of march, due to the ongoing covid 19situation all prisoners are on 24hour lockdown with no access to facilities or excercise and only unlocked for meals and medication. All family visits are cancelled.

I am contacting anyone who is in a position to forward the proposal of the early release of low risk prisoners so that they may return to their families at this time of crisis This would enable an already overstretched prison service to cope safely and more efficiently with those prisoners that could not be considered for safe release but obviously I have a very selfish and personal interest in getting my wife back to a safe environment at this unprecedented time.

I have always viewed you as a strong and practical leader who makes difficult decisions even when they may not be popular with the voting public and I hope that you will be able to apply the same rationale to this situation.

I would greatly appreciate your support and your response to this request Regards REDACTED

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From: REDACTED
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 8:10:14 PM
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject:

Hi Humza

I write to you in regards to a person incarcerated at hmp barlinnie. He recently had a REDACTED I am extremely concerned as he is still in barlinnie especially with covid on the rise. REDACTED. I had hoped for early release with an electronic tag (REDACTED) I have emailed governor but had no reply. I would be grateful if you could help at all?

Kind regards

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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From: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Sent: 25 March 2020 20:37
To: Cabinet Secretary for Justice <CabSecJustice@gov.scot>
Subject: Fwd: Urgent action needed for prisoner release during the CV crisis

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From: REDACTED
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 10:09:59 AM
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Urgent action needed for prisoner release during the CV crisis

Dear Mr Yousaf,

I am writing to ask for **urgent** consideration to be given to the early release of prisoners during the current critical global health crisis.

The government and public are inclined to dismiss prisoners as low-priority and undeserving citizens and the response to deal with the virus with regard to prisons has been shamefully slow given the conditions of overcrowding and confinement.

I hope that my single, personal experience of having a family member in prison as outlined below, illustrates simply that prisoners are not intrinsically dangerous or evil people who should be disregarded in this time of crisis. I believe that this is the reason for the slow response to the imminent prison-virus crisis. The news is showing that early release is under discussion, but this needs to be fast-tracked and many low-risk individuals should be prepared for release as a matter of urgency.

Many prisoners are sentenced for non-violent criminal activity. My REDACTED son, who is of good character and family background, has almost completed a REDACTED sentence for selling drugs, with REDACTED. I am confident that any risk assessment by the prison would corroborate that he is not a threat to the public and could be released with confidence, tagged if necessary, to stay with me safely. Moreover he has asthma and I am naturally concerned about the prisons' typically poor limited and slow response to health issues. There will be many others who have underlying, and possibly undiagnosed, health problems.

All low risk prisoners, such as those in category D prisons, those who are temporarily held on remand for non-violent crimes, those who are elderly or vulnerable and those who are still *children* and who could – like my son – should be released **without delay** thereby reducing pressure on the prisons in a very difficult and critical time for prisoners where it will be very difficult to contain both the prisoners and the virus.

Thank you for your action.

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From: REDACTED
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 9:50:10 AM
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Prisoners contracting coronavirus

Dear sir

My son is a nearly REDACTED man who is currently being held in HMP Glenochil. He has been there since REDACTED. His welfare is playing very heavy on my mind. As is the welfare of all our men and women in our prisons.

I have heard on BBC that prisoners in England and Wales are looking to be released. I would really like to know how you are going to keep our prisoners safe. Surely to release some even if they were on house arrest tagged I'm not sure but something where by they are not hundreds of them in these buildings. I understand some of these people will never be released and I would hate to be the person who decides any kind of serious decision at this time when our world is changing so much.

I beg you to consider the lives of these men and women at this time when it would seem we will lose so many lives from our communities. Don't just leave them there let some of them have a decent chance and the others who remain could have more of a chance with less crowded less people.

I am in shock at the state of our country in the last fortnight. I am a key worker in the financial sector I will do what is asked of me at this time. REDACTED even if he survives this I may not. Please consider allowing the ones who can come home to do so. I fear I will never see my boy again.

Yours faithfully

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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From: REDACTED
Sent: 31 March 2020 14:58
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>;
Pete.wishart.mp@parliament.uk; pete.wishart.mp@parliament.co.uk
Subject: Prisoner

Hi Both

I hope you both are well and coping with all what's currently happening. All of us here at Perth are praying for everyone and hoping that this crisis ends.

My purpose of emailing you both is as I have seen that Scottish Government are looking at releasing prisoners. I am sure Pete you will be aware that my brother REDACTED is currently serving a prison sentence in HMP Perth. He is due his parole in REDACTED . Considering all the circumstances and having a look at the current positions of prisons we as a family are very concerned for REDACTED health and wellbeing.

REDACTED. We are not looking at this as an opportunity for REDACTED to come out but we are looking at it for his safety. REDACTED would have a home to come to and would be a lot more safer than he is at the moment. We are very aware that social distancing is the key to stop this virus from spreading – we are very worried and concerned for his health at the moment, my mother suffers from depression and this all has made her panic, she is not sleeping at night as a family we all are constantly worrying about REDACTED. We can assure you that you can even release REDACTED temporarily, put him on a curfew etc whatever it takes just so we can have him home and safe. We have a family home which we would provide for him, he would not be a burden on the benefits system he would just be safe.

We hope you will consider the above as we are very anxious and feel that it is out of our hands and in your hands. Please feel free to contact me on REDACTED

A mentioned about whatever boundaries you put on him we will make sure we adhere to them. This is a very difficult time for people all over the world, we hope you will look at REDACTED cases and consider early release to him.

Thank you
REDACTED

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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Fri 27/03/2020 20:03

REDACTED

Prisoner release due to COVID-19

Scottish Ministers [Scottish Ministers@gov.scot](mailto:Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot)

Hi

I've heard a lot about the possibility of some prisoners being released either early or for a short-term during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

I would like to request that my son, REDACTED, is considered. He is currently in HMP Barlinnie. He would stay with me at REDACTED

I have ample room and he would have his own bedroom and bathroom so could easily self isolate if he became ill with the virus. I also have a good sized, fully enclosed and private garden to allow him to have daily exercise. I am not attending work for the foreseeable future so I am here to look after him.

I am seriously worried about his health and his mental health. The current over crowding issues and the potential spread of the virus within the prison are also of major concern.

REDACTED has been engaged in a variety of programmes since being in Barlinnie including working and education. He is a very reliable and responsible person. I can fully assure you that REDACTED will abide by any restrictions imposed on him, including full home restriction.

I would really appreciate you giving this request full consideration.

If you need to contact me, or arrange a visit of my home to assess suitability, please email by return or phone me on REDACTED.

Kind regards
REDACTED

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REDACTED

CONFIDENTIAL FAO Humza Yousaf - Prisoner early release
Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Hello Mr Yousaf

I realise difficult, but necessary decisions, are being taken at this time of crisis. I commend you and all your colleagues for all you are doing to keep us safe.

However, can I please request that you do not consider prisoner REDACTED for early release? As you probably know, he was imprisoned after REDACTED. Although I was not any part of that trial, I have personal experience of the REDACTED
Please consider the crimes for which REDACTED is convicted and ensure that he is not part of prisoner early release.

Many, many thanks
REDACTED

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Sat 28/03/2020 15:18

REDACTED

Protection of prisoners

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Hi my name is i'm a wife of a long term prisoner In HMP Berlini glasgow my husband is coming to the end of his sentence REDACTED. I have major concerns over the coronavirus outbreak in this jail as daily is rising higher I have been checking the news regular to see if there's any update with protection of prisoners and officers as I'm very concerned about my husband I am wondering if there is any chance of prisoners to be let out on a temporary basis until the coronavirus is controlled as the virus is spreading rapidly in the jail. I am a working citizen i've had a background check with the social worker REDACTED I'm very worried about my husband this is having a big massive affected on my daily life casing me to get really bad anxiety as I am really worried about my husband as the jail is over crowded and the is not much Social distancing from the other prisoners as he's on the semi open side of the jail and there rooms are closed together and side by side I've not been able to see him for weeks now I get a phone call daily and I'm really scared for my husband of catching this but this virus as it is spreading rapidly if there is any chance of these prisoners who are low risk and coming an end of there sentence to be sent home like my husband till this coronavirus is controlled as they will be safer at home and more space for high risk prisoner to be isolated with symptoms thank very much hope to hear from you soon REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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Sun 29/03/2020 12:15

REDACTED

Open prison castle Huntley

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Dear sir

I find myself writing this email in support of prisoners in the open conditions. I myself have a son in castle Huntley. The prison service in scotland has made a massive impact in keeping families together. There work with families has been outstanding. BUT we now find ourselves in unprecedented times. These guys have worked to a position of trust. . For instance REDACTED I also have two grandchildren that have a mother that is a key worker. REDACTED. Why cant trusted prisoners have extended leave to support the single mothers and there children. Such good work has been done by this scottish government in relation to keeping families together. Now the key workers with children face losing jobs and kids losing that bond with fathers. I like many ask you to please took at these trusted prisoners.

Many thanks

REDACTED

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

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From: REDACTED
Sent: Saturday, March 28, 2020 9:40:08 AM
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Help for my partner

Hi my name is REDACTED is currently in a category D prison castle Huntly in Dundee, he is a very low risk prisoner has been very very well behaved all through his sentence and is able to apply for parole on the end REDACTED ,I am really really worried about the current situation in prison just now with the ongoing Covid 19 REDACTED ,they have no way of social distancing in prison and would be much safer at home ,I feel this is just a really bad situation waiting to happen if one prisoner in there gets the virus I think the whole prison will get it ,and at the moment the situation is there is no visits and no home leave REDACTED now I feel it's such a big change to not have any contact with his family REDACTED and having no contact with her father is just going to make her health worse I feel that my partner should be allowed home on a tag at a time like this for us to support each other as it is a very uncertain time for everyone ,as realistically he should definitely REDACTED as he has had outstanding good behaviour and has never been in trouble before this sentence REDACTED, also I think they should have access to FaceTime there family they should be given mobile phones at a time like this it's so unfair they have nothing and these are the prisoners that have earned there privileges as they are in open prison, but just now treated like category B high risk prisoners with no privileges they are all really low with the way they are been treated can you help in any way .I seen that you are working to release some prisoners early I strongly feel that if any prisoners are to be released early it should start with Low risk catagory Prisoners in category D prisons and the vulnerable .Thanks REDACTED

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From: no-reply@crm.wix.com <no-reply@crm.wix.com>
Sent: 27 March 2020 20:17
To: REDACTED
Subject: New message via your website, from REDACTED

REDACTED just submitted your form:
<https://www.humzayousaf.org/>

Message Details

Name: REDACTED

Email: REDACTED

Phone: REDACTED

Subject: Prisoners at Castle Huntly

Message: Hi I would like to know what the plans are during the coronavirus for Prisoners of Castle Huntly Prison. Iran let out 85,000 prisoners and england & wales are looking into this however not much so far in a way of scottish prisoners especially those that are in the open estate. My partner REDACTED and is now on complete lockdown due to covid19. No visits allowed. I think for these prisoners who have done all they can to get where they are should at least get out during this period considering he gets one week a month anyway or if not at the very least some kind of video calling. I understand the circumstances however as Justice Secretary you need to take these prisoners mental health into consideration especially for prisoners at the open estate who get regular contact with their kids and families. Kind Regards A very worried Partner REDACTED

To edit your email settings, go to your Inbox on desktop.

From: noreply@parliament.scot <noreply@parliament.scot>
Sent: Saturday, March 28, 2020 1:49:36 PM
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Message from Scottish Parliament website

name:
REDACTED

address:
REDACTED

postcode:
REDACTED

email:
REDACTED

telephone:
REDACTED

message:

Hi, I understand that you are very busy at the moment and under a lot of stress. My partner is in Greenock prison. REDACTED With this virus it out off everyone control. But it's a stressful time for us also. With the visits now stopped it even more stressful as not getting to visit him. He also has REDACTED.

He could be at home with hdc tag and be here for me as I have no one else just now as everyone isolating.

I've also read about people getting early release now as they at end of there sentence. REDACTED Please can you take the time to read this and help him get him hdc forms so he can be home with us at this difficult time.

Look forward to your response.

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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From: no-reply@crm.wix.com <no-reply@crm.wix.com>
Sent: 30 March 2020 08:10
To: REDACTED
Subject: New message via your website, from REDACTED

REDACTED just submitted your form:
<https://www.humzayousaf.org/>

Message Details

Name: REDACTED

Email: REDACTED

Phone: REDACTED

Address: REDACTED

Subject: Release my innocent fiance

Message: During this stressful time it seems that those locked up in the prison service are being forgotten about! My fiance was falsely accused by REDACTED. He had an unfair trial where REDACTED. He is INNOCENT and yet he is now having to sit in a prison cell 23 hours a day! We are appealing the conviction which now will be delayed. During this time he SHOULD be allowed home even if it's on tag. He has done nothing wrong, REDACTED Please let him home! His name is REDACTED. He is in HMP Edinburgh and he is INNOCENT!

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Tue 31/03/2020 10:27

REDACTED

Prisons

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Hello my partner is in prison for first time offence and I have a toddler at home and play a key role in the community, my partner will not get progression like any other of the prisons and is now missing out on a big part of his sons life also this effecting my son as he only sees pictures of his father. Can there be answers wether due to this virus and the effect it having on families and prisoners will there sentence be shortened due to the impact of prisoners being on lockdown for 23 hours and not seeing family.

Kind regards

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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From: REDACTED
Sent: 30 March 2020 15:55
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Prisoner realise (REDACTED)

To whom it may concern,

I'm emailing in respect of my brother who's a REDACTED prisoner at HMP Castle Huntley.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I understand that low-level prisoners who are set to be released are being looked at for 'early release' if they have underlying health issues.

REDACTED Is more at risk of catching the virus in castle Huntley than he is at home.

I know the government has released guidelines for people who are at higher risk of needing critical care if they catch coronavirus because they have a severe respiratory condition (asthma) REDACTED.

REDACTED

I hope you take REDACTED into consideration for this early release programme as he's proved he's a model prisoner with both staff and fellow inmates alike REDACTED is not a threat to the outside community.

Prison officers going to and from Castle Huntley is putting all prisoners at more risk especially ones with really bad underlying health problems REDACTED. I fear for his health and wellbeing with this serious situation to people's life's.

I look forward to hearing your response.

Yours sincerely,

REDACTED

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From: no-reply@crm.wix.com <no-reply@crm.wix.com>
Sent: 31 March 2020 00:01
To: REDACTED
Subject: New message via your website, from REDACTED

REDACTED just submitted your form:
<https://www.humzayousaf.org/>

Message Details

Name: REDACTED

Email: REDACTED

Phone: REDACTED

Subject: Covid pandemic

Message: Dear Mr Yousaf, I appreciate this must be an extremely busy time for you writing this just to explain a little bit about my current situation. I am a REDACTED year old mum I'm currently living alone with my children and my partner is housed in REDACTED barlinnie at present. His name is REDACTED every one has a story and this isn't one trying to defend or protest against him receiving a custodial sentence. REDACTED Due to the current covid pandemic I am extremely worried if he or I became ill we might never see each other again , REDACTED The children have never been to the prison we both agree it's not a place for them so I am out here on my own with them and I am writing this to ask if prisoners were to be released early could you please consider. REDACTED We have a huge support network to work with out here that would be in place , he can't receive it anymore in prison because his worker isn't allowed to visit due to covid risk factors REDACTED. If anything happened to me out here the children don't have anyone and I have discussed with a social worker my requests if I was to fall ill which is a horrific conversation to have even to think of . This isn't a sympathy vote or a victim card but I will list the workers names and contact details who all believe in REDACTED recovery and I am asking for a chance to have my family together at these uncertain times I'm scared and worry so much . REDACTED I've never been in trouble and I'm a really positive nurturing influence in his life we met for a reason REDACTED has been so gentle and caring and loved me back to life he reminds me how strong I have been and admires my courage as I do his in light of the life's we have had REDACTED I have never took drugs or had drink or substance issues. One thing I know I am is a great mother I know what I don't want my kids to experience and I strive to emotionally and mentally support and nurture them everyday to be confident , creative and loving little human beings . REDACTED I am extremely grateful if you even take the time to read this it would mean alot many thanks and well wishes from my family to yours at this uncertain time . Gratefully REDACTED

□

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-----Original Message-----

From: REDACTED

Sent: 02 April 2020 17:29

To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>

Subject: Prisoner

My son is currently REDACTED sentence REDACTED is he likely to be released early due to current situation with vivid 19 I'm very worried about him as I've heard that prisons are high risk Sent from my iPhone

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From:
[FirstMinisterWebsite@gov.scot][SMTP:FIRSTMINISTERWEBSITE@GOV.SCOT]
Sent: 04 April 2020 23:07:51
To: First Ministers Website Mailbox
Subject: TONIGHTS NEWS - RELEASE OF PRISONERS Auto forwarded by a Rule

From: REDACTED
Subject: TONIGHTS NEWS - RELEASE OF PRISONERS

Message Body:

Hello Nicola, you probably won't remember me, but met you at REDACTED. Just heard on news tonight England & Wales early releasing prisoners in England & Wales. I think this is awful, as they have been inside, so no way will they want to self isolate. I hope you will take further measures & close Scottish borders so they can't jump into Scotland. Sure you follow with them & release prisoner. Just can't believe they have decided to do this!!

Kind regards
REDACTED

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Wed 08/04/2020 13:44

REDACTED

Early Prisoner Release Scotland

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Hi,

I have emailed & called so many Ministers trying to get information as to why Scottish prisoners who have 2months of their sentence left are not being released from prison?

England, Wales & even America have began the process due to Covid-19.

Why is Scotland behind once again?

Our family members are stuck in there during this pandemic, we can not visit them, we cannot FaceTime them, they are among vulnerable people, some who battle addiction. All services including meetings, gym, activities, education & free time have all been stopped. They are now having their time spent in the cell increased too due to staff shortages. They are coming out from prison to a lockdown situation so what it the hold up!!

Can someone please get back to me regarding this.

Thank you

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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From: REDACTED
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 12:56:13 AM
To: Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP <Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Prisoners during covid 19

Hi there

I'd first of like to thank you for everything you have done and are doing to protect our beautiful country and it's people during this time. My name is REDACTED so I have the benefits of being pretty isolated already, unfortunately for my dad he doesn't have the same luxury. He is currently serving a sentence in HMP Barlinnie for a very stupid mistake he made. This is the first time he's ever been in trouble never mind been in jail, he is a short term prisoner and is coming to the end of his sentence me and the rest of my family are just extremely worried about his safety. He shares a cell which means he is not 2 meters away from people at a time and REDACTED. I don't think it's safe for him or any of the hard working staff to be around so many people so close together. I think that the short term prisoners should be let out and put on the tag or house arrest or anything other than being cramped up in their cells. Thank you so much for your time and I know it's not your constituency but you have always been a hero of mine and out of everyone I thought to message I thought you would probably care the most. I really hope you see how dangerous it may be for all the citizens locked up at this time and how worried their families will be as I'm sure my family isn't the only one effected by this topic.

Alba gu bràth
REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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Fri 10/04/2020 08:31

REDACTED

Covid-19

Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>

Dear Mr Yousaf,

I am writing to you in request of information regarding the early release of prisoners as a result of the recent virus outbreak. As the news states, England plan to release 15,000 prisoners early to reduce the risk of this virus spreading through our prisons. Are there plans to do the same within Scotland and if so what are the criteria determining early release for long-term prisoners?

I appreciate you are busy at this time and so a reply would be greatly appreciated.

Kind Regards,

REDACTED

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From: REDACTED
Sent: 15 April 2020 15:26
To: Cabinet Secretary for Justice <CabSecJustice@gov.scot>
Subject: Covid-19. ADDIEWELL PRISON

Hi

My son is a prisoner in Addiewell prison REDACTED , it has just been confirmed today that 3 prisoners in my sons hall have the Coronavirus.. my worry is that my son gets this deadly virus .

You said that if the virus was in the prison that prisoners with 3 month or less to go would be released .. can you please clarify this and let me know what is to happen as I am deeply concerned about my sons welfare .

Kind regards

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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From: REDACTED
Sent: 22 April 2020 09:18
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Subject: Early release of prisoners

Dear Mr Yousaf

I am deeply concerned with the Scottish Government's plan to release prisoners early because of the Coronavirus pandemic, I can think of nothing worse than prisoners coming back into the community after spending varied times behind bars, these people are locked up because they have committed crimes against society some very serious, I would think most of those prisoners lead chaotic dysfunctional life styles and to then put them back into the community at this time when everyone in the country has got to stay disciplined every hour of the day to try and get us through this awful time, it is sheer folly to think they will suddenly behave like responsible citizens.

Our NHS and all our other services like police are stretched to the limit the last thing they need is for this extra headache, there is absolutely no chance these people on release will stay at home like the rest of us more likely be back on the street to carry on where they left off.

I appeal to the Scottish Government to have a rethink of this very bad idea.

Yours Sincerely
REDACTED

From: REDACTED
Sent: 23 April 2020 14:55
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: REDACTED

Dear Mr Yousaf MSP

I am writing as your constituent and also on behalf of my brother REDACTED who is also your constituent.

My brother REDACTED has been in HMP Barlinnie REDACTED

He applied to be tagged and home checks etc. were completed REDACTED

REDACTED has been the model Prisoner whilst in Barlinnie, REDACTED. Does this sound like someone who is not complying nor showing willing?

Prior to his trial, REDACTED

As his MSP I would ask that you take this matter up with the Scottish Prison Service as there is no reason to why REDACTED should not be approved for a Tag.

My understanding is that those who have less than 3 months to serve will be considered and the only exemptions are, as stated on the Scottish Government website ‘the release of prisoners under the regulations will be subject to exclusions to ensure public protection, such as those who are imprisoned for life, or with convictions for sexual offences, domestic abuse or terrorism offences. My brother does not fall into this category.

REDACTED.

My brother has accepted and fully complied with his punishment. The Scottish Prison Service / Department of Justice are putting my brother's health and life at risk by not approving him for early release through tagging.

I would ask as a matter of urgency that you enquire into why REDACTED has been denied tagging and identify those who may have illegally and immorally influenced this decision – and why information / reports from the Prison were not considered – if they had, there is no doubt in my mind that we would not be having this conversation.

Yours sincerely

REDACTED

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Thu 16/04/2020 01:31

REDACTED

Prison services

Scottish Ministers [Scottish Ministers@gov.scot](mailto:Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot)

Hello,

I'm not sure who I should be emailing or even where to start but I'm extremely concerned about my partner who is currently in prison and serving REDACTED sentence in HMP addiewell REDACTED so due to him being sentenced whilst on this we were waiting to hear what was going to happen as I'm sure under different circumstances he would have been released after REDACTED but due to COVID 19 everything has been put on hold.

REDACTED – OUT OF SCOPE

Now we are in this situation with the Coronavirus and on lockdown we can't even visit the prison and he only gets one phone call a day, he's meant to only get out at set times for meals but this isn't the case. The prisoners shout at the officers to let them out of their cells and basically bully the officers in to letting them do what they want and I've witnessed this on visits and heard them shouting in the background of the phone calls it's disgusting. I think it's because they are short staffed and majority of staff are very young and probably scared incase something kicks off. I'm petrified my partner gets COVID 19 as it's impossible to social distance due to them being over populated and not everyone having their own cells, These guys obviously aren't going out to put themselves or anyone else at risk but it's the staff who have obviously took it in to the prison and now a full wing is on lockdown due to 9 suspected cases of it. I believe everyone has the right to live and safely at that but for these guys it's impossible and something needs to be done.

If you can recommend anyone for me to speak to about my concerns please let me know or any information about how we can find out about my partners release as he's asking staff in the prison but nobody can give him any answer it's so frustrating for us as a family. I understand this is a tiny problem in the world with what's going on just now but he's the world to us and we just want to know he's in a safe place, I look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks

REDACTED

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From: REDACTED **On Behalf Of** Lamont J (Johann), MSP
Sent: 27 April 2020 08:45
To: Cabinet Secretary for Justice <CabSecJustice@gov.scot>
Subject: Constituent Enquiry

Dear Cabinet Secretary

REDACTED

I hope you are keeping well during this unprecedented time.

I have been contacted by the brother of the above constituent who has raised concerns regarding his parole being refused.

I understand that REDACTED has been in HMP Barlinnie since the REDACTED . I further understand that he was sentenced to REDACTED with a scheduled release date REDACTED.

The family reports that REDACTED applied to be tagged and home checks etc. were completed; however this week he was informed that REDACTED.

The family reports that REDACTED They further report that he has had no reports made against him and has behaved throughout.

I understand that, prior to his trial, REDACTED.

The family has highlighted that prisoners who have less than 3 months to serve will be considered for parole and the only exemptions are, as stated on the Scottish Government website, ‘the release of prisoners under the regulations will be subject to exclusions to ensure public protection, such as those who are imprisoned for life, or with convictions for sexual offences, domestic abuse or terrorism offences’. The family maintains that their brother does not fall into this category.

I have made it clear to the family that I cannot influence any parole decision; however, I agreed to raise their concerns and I would, therefore, be grateful if it would be possible for you to clarify why REDACTED parole has been refused when the family maintains that he has met all requirements.

Kind regards,

Johann

Johann Lamont MSP (Glasgow Region)

Bellahouston Business Centre, 423 Paisley Road West, Glasgow, G51 1PZ

Tel: 0141 465 9937

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Your Reference:

REDACTED Message: Dear Mr Yousaf, I hope your well. I feel I ought to write to you regarding my partner who is a currently being held at Low Moss Prison. His HDC date was REDACTED and all the necessary risk assessments and social work home visits have been concluded well before the outbreak of the virus. A week before Lockdown began REDACTED. The HDC application REDACTED. I think it's totally unacceptable given his circumstances of such a low risk prisoner to be held well beyond his HDC release date. I would have thought it would be in the prisons interest to start releasing prisoners on HDC especially those who's applications are complete. Could you please contact the prison about this and if so I will pass my partners details on to you. He has been more than patient now and the prison have been given more than a reasonable amount of time to sign this off. I would also like to mention this is starting to take a big impact on his mental health as well as the worry of him catching the virus. I look forward to your response and I hope you can look into this Kind regards,
REDACTED

-----Original Message-----

From: REDACTED

Sent: 06 May 2020 22:39

To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>

Subject: National Top End Barlinnie Prison

Morning Yousaf

I'm writing to you hoping for some answers for our loved ones in prison . My partner REDACTED. and him and fellow inmates who are low category risk offenders are feeling helpless again and wondering when the battle of getting "over the fence "will end ?

Daily they struggle With an In humane heating system , horrendous waiting times for paperwork plus a lack of facilities. These are men who until covid we're out working in the community and making a difference to themselves and their families . They had hope and now once again there is none .

Howard League Scotland has asked you to consider early release for low risk prisoners on 25th March 2020 . The longer it takes for top end prisoners to move on mental health , hope and faith in the justice system will continue to deteriorate . Which again can start the cycle of lack of self worth and turning to drugs . Which is a horrendous cycle in prison that needs to stop too .

Some of these guys have completed degrees and are making positive changes to how society view and respect them . On behalf of family and friends within REDACTED I'd like to hear your views and what plans there is for these men about to be moved on to castle Huntley . Surly covid can't effect the time they have left to serve ? So many worrying and unanswered questions the family's need to know .

Really hope you can help put all our minds at ease to stop the delay in our loved ones coming home

Look forward to your response Yousaf

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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Sat 28/03/2020 13:38

REDACTED

Prison release

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Hi, I understand that you are very busy at the moment and under a lot of stress. My partner is in Greenock prison. He was due to have his papers for hdc 2 weeks ago but with all this going on he not heard nothing. We REDACTED were hoping he eligible for tag and would hopefully be out around then. With this virus it out off everyone control. But it's a stressful time for us also. With the visits now stopped it even more stressful as not getting to visit him. He also REDACTED which is worrying as if he caught the virus he might get it worse than others.

He could be at home with hdc tag and be here for me as I have no one else just now as everyone isolating.

I've also read about people getting early release now as they at end of there sentence. His actual release date REDACTED

Please can you take the time to read this and help him get him hdc forms so he can be home with us at this difficult time.

Look forward to your response.

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

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From: REDACTED **Sent:** 25 March 2020 12:02
To: Cabinet Secretary for Justice <CabSecJustice@gov.scot>; REDACTED
Subject: Covid-19 - REDACTED HMP Castle Huntly
Importance: High

Dear Cabinet Secretary & REDACTED

Shona has been contacted by REDACTED, regarding REDACTED.
With all HMPs on lockdown due to the spread of the Coronavirus, all visits are also rightly cancelled just now.

However, in REDACTED case his partner As a key worker REDACTED children are attending school, but both have asthma and they can't be left with REDACTED parents as they have underlying health issues.

There is no childcare and ideally given the situation and I understand REDACTED has been assessed as low risk would an option that REDACTED could remain at home on extended licence or whatever the prison can facilitate to help, REDACTED?

REDACTED has contacted both the Depute Governor, REDACTED and sent an email to you Cabinet Secretary.

I note that the UK Government have muted the possibility of releasing some low risk or early release prisoners to help ease the pressure on the Prison system during this outbreak and ask if REDACTED individual case could be looked at as matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely

REDACTED

Senior Caseworker for Shona Robison MSP Dundee City East

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From: REDACTED
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 11:44:51 AM
To: Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP <Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Re, Prisoners

Hi Nicola, I'm contacting you today regarding about the recently statement you have said, please don't release the prisoners. They are a high risk of offending again and murders and Sex offenders. I know someone who is in Inverness jail REDACTED and I don't want him to be released. Please Nicola do everything in your power to not make this happen.

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From: no-reply@crm.wix.com <no-reply@crm.wix.com>
Sent: 09 April 2020 21:26
To: REDACTED
Subject: New message via your website, from REDACTED

REDACTED just submitted your form:
<https://www.humzayousaf.org/>

Message Details

Name: REDACTED

Email: REDACTED

Phone: REDACTED

Subject: Early Prisoner Release

Message: Dear Mr Yousaf, I have previously contacted your office & was given an email address to help my question. I have had no reply. I want to know when you will pass the bill to allow Scottish prisoners who have 2months or less left of their sentence to be released early from prison due to Covid-19?? England, Wales & even America have began this process. I spoke with Lord Chancellor Robert Buckland who said that you are the one responsible for making the decision regarding Scotland so why are you resisting calls? Our family members are being released from prison to a lockdown situation so what is the hold up? I look forward to your reply. REDACTED

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Thu 30/04/2020 12:16

Colin Beattie MSP colin.beattie.msp@parliament.scot

HMP Prison Case (Case Ref: REDACTED)

To: Cabinet Secretary for Justice CabSecJustice@gov.scot

Cc: Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Dear Humza,

I have received the attached correspondence from a constituent, REDACTED, on behalf of the father of her children, REDACTED, who is detained at the HMP Prison in Edinburgh.

The document attached is an extensive explanation as to why REDACTED believes that REDACTED would qualify to be released within the coming months and she has outlined where she feels there is unfair treatment of her ex partner from the judicial system.

Could I ask you to look into this case and investigate the matters at hand? Can I ask that there is a review of this case and due consideration can be given as to whether REDACTED would qualify for early release or not?

Kind Regards,

Colin

Colin Beattie MSP

Midlothian North and Musselburgh

Scottish Parliament
M3.05
Holyrood
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP
Tel: 0131 348 6373

Constituency Office
164 High Street
Dalkeith
EH22 1AY
Tel: 0131 454 0204

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REDACTED
28th April 2020

FAO: The Cabinet Secretary for Justice
Mr Humza Yousaf
1612-1614 Paisley Road West
Cardonald
Glasgow
G52 3QN

Dear Sir,

I am writing in respect of recent actions that you have decided to be taken regarding the early release of prisoners due to the COVID-19 outbreak, in order to help minimise the spread of the virus and protect both detained prisoner's and staff working in Scottish Prisons.

I was saddened by the recent death of a Prison Officer in a Scottish Prison due to Covid-19 and I understand the difficult decision's that must be taken during these extraordinary times to protect all within the prison walls, and their immediate families outside.

The father of my two children REDACTED is currently detained at HMP Edinburgh, 33 Stenhouse Road, Edinburgh, EH11 3LN, and is due for release on the REDACTED . Although we have been separated REDACTED he is still very much apart of our family life and his two children REDACTED, love and miss him dearly.

I never imagined I would ever have any contact with the law, but since going on this journey, my eyes have been opened and I find the current Judicial System in Scotland not to be just and fair once somebody has been charged and sentenced. It appears the rules for fair and equal rights, part of the Human Rights Act are not always upheld by the governing SPS regarding prisoners serving time.

I urge you to please read my letter and understand why I believe the system to be unjust and inconsistent in the decisions that have been made about REDACTED and early release.

Prisoners were notified of the recent statements regarding early release last week, but then REDACTED was told it would not be him.

I believe this to be unwarranted. He meets every requirement that you laid out in your speech at the "*Meeting of Parliament 21 April 2020 – Covid-19 (Justice)*". I have added notes accordingly.

The Scottish Parliament Website

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• Official Report
Meeting of the Parliament 21 April 2020
Covid-19 (Justice)
The Deputy Presiding Officer (Linda Fabiani):

The next item of business is a statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Humza Yousaf, on coronavirus: justice sector response. The cabinet secretary will take questions at the end of his statement, so there should be no interventions or interruptions.

14:44

We recently debated the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, and provisions on prisoner release secured unanimous support. Work continues within the SPS and justice social work to carefully assess prisoners and decide who can be permitted to spend the last section of their sentence on a tag on home detention curfew. The slowdown in court business has also reduced the number of people in prison.

However, we should not underestimate the challenges that our prisons face in protecting and managing the prison population in the context of Covid-19. There are still a significant number of prison staff who cannot be in work due to ill health or a requirement to isolate, or as a result of needing to take care of children or family members. Taken together with the changes to prison regimes, those factors make prisons an especially challenging environment at present for prisoners, prison officers, NHS staff and others who work in our prisons. We have also had recent confirmation of a further three weeks of lockdown, so we need to make arrangements now with a view to the continued running of prisons over the following weeks.

I can advise the Parliament today that, after careful consideration and in agreement with the views of the chief executive of the Scottish Prison Service, I will be asking the SPS to consider the release of a limited number of short-sentenced prisoners towards the end of their time in custody. I believe that that is a necessary and proportionate response to the current situation in our prisons. It is in the interests of maintaining security and good order in our prisons, and it is vital in maintaining and safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of prisoners and those who work in our prisons. The action will help to give the SPS sufficient capacity, including increased single cell occupancy, to continue to maintain a safe custodial environment.

By the end of this month, we will lay regulations to make use of the powers that Parliament agreed, and release will begin at that point. In advance of regulations being laid, I can advise members of some of the detail of the arrangements.

Only those prisoners who are serving sentences of 18 months or less and who are in the last three months of their time in custody will be placed under consideration for possible release. They are short-term prisoners who are already due to be released over the next three months as their time in custody ends, and they would typically be released without any further requirement for supervision in the community. The release process is scheduled to begin at the end of this month and to run for four weeks.

REDACTED was taken into custody on REDACTED and is due to be released on REDACTED – this is most certainly under the 18 months or less and who are in the last three months of their time in custody, as you stated above.

The act already rules out any early release for certain types of prisoner, such as those who have been sentenced for sexual or terrorism offences and those who have been sentenced to supervision orders after their release. The regulations for the process will rule out the release of further categories of prisoner, including those who are serving sentences for domestic abuse offences, those with non-harassment orders and those who have been convicted of certain Covid-19-related offences.

REDACTED

The Criminal Justice Social Work Department also rang myself back in REDACTED when his “Tag” application had been accepted. We had a good conversation regarding family life and the REDACTED children and I expressed a very clear view that we are there to support him and we were looking forward to his release. The conclusion from the conversation was that their side of the case would be closed and I would receive no further communication from them as they were satisfied and needed no further response.

Under the act, prison governors will have the power to veto any individual’s early release where there is evidence that they would present an immediate risk to an identified individual. The individual at risk may be a specific person or a person who belongs to a specific group

Regarding the above statement, I believe I have covered all the facts in my previous note that he was assessed as presenting neither serious nor imminent risk of harm in regard to the community. REDACTED.

The process will consider for release around 450 prisoners, who will all be approaching their scheduled release date. The review and veto process will inevitably reduce the eventual numbers who are released.

We will work with a range of public and third sector services to enable prison leavers to access the housing and healthcare benefits and other support services that they need

I understand that you are not able to personally look at every case individually, however in regard to the above, I plead with you, the board and the governor, to look at the facts of his sentence and what he was convicted for, REDACTED . I will explain further below.

Changes are being made to the victim notification scheme so that victims and their families who have signed up to receive updates from the VNS will be informed if an individual whom they are registered in connection with will be released under the arrangements.

This statement has no bearing on REDACTED as there was no victim in this case, just poor judgment on his behalf.

I understand that that will a difficult decision for some, including, of course, victims of crime. Let me be clear: it in no way diminishes the harm that victims have suffered. However, in these exceptional and unprecedented times, we must take difficult decisions that best reduce the risk of further harm.

I understand here the difficult decision that has had to be taken to protect the SPS, those in custody and immediate families of both. I do not take lightly the amount of thought that has gone into this decision.

However I believe and find that the execution of the above decisions will not be upheld or carried out fairly.

REDACTED was taken into custody on REDACTED and I must admit at this point we were not on the best of terms. I was finding his lack of commitment to family time hard to bear, but he was in a mind-set that they didn't need him. I was shocked at what came out in the press, as this was not the REDACTED. I knew and had loved for many years. He had made some very poor judgments.

REDACTED – OUT OF SCOPE

Once REDACTED he applied for the "Tag" due the short time he had left on his sentence. It was granted and I spoke to a Criminal Justice Social Worker, and she was shown REDACTED house, and everything was satisfactory. Through friends and family we have looked after REDACTED house, his mortgage and other household bills, so he could look forward to being released. He has a good group of friends and family who love him very much and want to help him rebuild his relationships.

Then his "Tag" was refused. Why? It appeared that the sentence he is serving was a REDACTED. The reference number which led to the REDACTED. The Crown clarified this.

However once that was amended another reason appeared for the refusal of the "Tag". The prison said they were REDACTED The lawyer has been in touch with The Crown on several occasions and it would appear that the prison had received erroneous information from the police about outstanding criminal matters of which REDACTED had none!

For a REDACTED time his "Tag" application had been stopped for three reasons according to the Unit Manager and Tag Governor, REDACTED that he has "police intelligence" that:

REDACTED

Where is REDACTED getting this "police Intelligence", REDACTED

Does REDACTED have the qualifications and right to over rule a Judge's decision REDACTED? The Judge presiding over REDACTED case looked at the evidence brought before him by The Crown Prosecution and charged him on that evidence. How can REDACTED state he is a risk to the community when The Criminal Social Work Department have already assessed him as posing no threat of serious harm, nor imminent risk of harm. Again I bring into question REDACTED qualifications in over ruling The Criminal Social Work Department?

REDACTED appears to be ignoring the real hard evidence of the case provided but REDACTED to make ill-qualified judgements and decisions. If on the REDACTED, the police had had any evidence to support the REDACTED it would have been brought up in their charge against him. They had REDACTED months to prove their case and as there was no evidence he was not prosecuted.

REDACTED

Mr Yousaf can you help explain to me how The Crown's information can be so different than that of the "Police Intelligence" that is being fed to the governing SPS?

In order for a Judicial system to work effectively The Crown has to provide evidence in order to bring a charge against someone and the defence also get to provide evidence and arguments against the prosecution. This in turn lets the Judge make a decision on that evidence provided.

However the rules surrounding the governing SPS in making decisions appear to be very different. They require no evidence and thus the prisoner is left undefended and with no rights. Is the SPS breaching the Human Rights Act? How can this be a fair system? If the governing SPS are refusing to speak to the prisoner's lawyer or make contact themselves with The Crown to get confirmation that nothing is outstanding, what rules are governing the SPS and protecting the prisoner's human rights within the walls?

REDACTED is in HMP Edinburgh carrying out his sentence for his charge, he should have equal rights of any prisoner, and any decision's that are being made regarding early release should be based on his charge where evidence has been provided.

I understand that REDACTED has been a model prisoner, and his time with in prison he has been treated the same of those who are of low risk. I am ready to support him and do whatever it takes to keep fighting for our children to have their Dad released from prison.

I would urge you Mr Yousaf, to look at the inconsistencies that I have found and question those who are responsible for consideration of matters such as early release, and to reconsider matters, especially in the context of the recent Covid 19 crisis.

REDACTED meets all the criteria detailed in your speech and REDACTED should not be allowed to base his decisions on information with no evidence, (proved by The Crown as not having charges outstanding), and block any communications helping to assist a prisoner's request to be considered for early release.

Yours Faithfully,

REDACTED

From: noreply@parliament.scot <noreply@parliament.scot>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 11:51:51 PM
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Message from Scottish Parliament website

name:
REDACTED

address:
REDACTED

postcode:
REDACTED

email:
REDACTED

telephone:
REDACTED

message:

Hi my name is REDACTED I'm a wife of a long prisoner In HMP Berlini glasgow my husband is coming to the end of his sentence and had been coming out on supervised visits and there had been no issues with my husband in REDACTED years. I have major concerns over the coronavirus outbreak in this jail I have been checking the news regular to see if there's any update as I'm very concerned about my husband I am wondering if there is any chance of prisoners to be let out on a temporary basis until the coronavirus is controlled as the virus is spreading rapidly in the jail. I am a working citizen REDACTED I'm very worried about my husband this is having a big massive affected on me daily worrying about my husband I've not been able to see him for weeks now I get a phone call daily but this virus is spreading really fast and I'm not just my husband but people who are coming to the end of there sentence to be let home where they are safer so there is les cases of the virus thank you very much REDACTED

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Sun 17/05/2020 14:49

REDACTED

My son

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Dear Mr Yousaf

I hope you don't mind me emailing you, I know you are a very busy man. My son is in addiewell prison. I have heard on the television that some prisoners have been released from prison a little earlier due to the coronavirus. He got REDACTED months on the REDACTED. For something that happened REDACTED years before. Please don't think I am in any way saying he shouldn't have been punished because it had been REDACTED years. What he did was wrong he REDACTED. He put in for a tag before the coronavirus outbreak and I had someone come from the social work department to see me to check if the house was ok for him to come to. The lady told me from her part on checking on the home and speaking to me she wouldn't have any concern about him coming here. I don't know if it was to soon but he never got the tag then. I don't if I'm right but they usually say that they do about half the time . I was thinking he should be allowed out in August. I'm so worried about the coronavirus and would much rather he was home with a tag here with his family. It said on the news that prisoners were being released a little earlier because of the virus. I have heard because addiewell is a private prison it's not happening there, they are not being released a little earlier. I wondered if there was anything you could possibly do to help. My name is REDACTED. My sons name is REDACTED. His prison number is REDACTED. If you need to speak to me my number is REDACTED, or my house number REDACTED. Thank you so much in advance.

Very much Obliged REDACTED

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Your Reference:

REDACTED

Thanks for your respond, I appreciate that you can't send information on an individual prisoner ect but I'm hoping you can help prisoners that have young families, my husband won't be eligible for the early realease as he's hoping to do his courses this year to try and get to the open prison REDACTED. I'm a really strong person but I'm now finding it hard not getting to see him so can only imagine how my children are feeling and also him, REDACTED and that's been REDACTED weeks today we've not seen him. I'm hoping that there will be some sort of help for prisoners with family as I know we won't be the only family in this situation, even like a home visit or something would make a huge difference. But obviously you have to what's best for everyone it's jut really hard seeing kids getting upset because they miss there dad and there's nothing we can do about it and don't know when they're next going to see them. Thanks

From: REDACTED
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2020 6:36:17 AM
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Partners HDC

Hi hope you are safe well and receive this email I understand you are very busy and weight of the world on your shoulders my name is REDACTED I am writing today on behalf of my partner REDACTED he is currently in addiwell prison he is serving REDACTED months for REDACTED he pleaded guilty first time gave honest statement and was on bail for over REDACTED which he didn't breach he isn't violent never been done for violence first time offender REDACTED he has full time job doesn't drink alcohol or take any drugs we have our own bungalow and REDACTED son who he hasn't seen since REDACTED looks to be months more before he does REDACTED and this REDACTED he is very well mannered and really wants chance to prove his self he respects the law deeply misses his son were hearts is broken he has been refused hdc in first week applies REDACTED in addiewell he is low cat and was refused risk assessment I respect that because of REDACTED but its deeply depressing each day gets worse we never hear from him he is very sorry and he didn't harm any1 he also was attending all classes before they was suspended addiwell hasn't released any prisoners due to covid as its private run prison sorry this message seems long but your are only hope we have to get him home as he fits all the criteria if you can please find time to have look thank you REDACTED

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Your Reference:
REDACTED
REDACTED

I am writing to Scottish Government in particular Humza Yousaf and Nicola Sturgeon in relation to the above. Over the past weeks during COVID-19 we have experienced an increase in crime locally in what is usually a very quiet and respectable area near to REDACTED. My husband who is an REDACTED has been working throughout this period REDACTED. I have been working throughout as a REDACTED covering many of my colleagues caseloads who are unable work due to a lack of access to childcare at this time. Much of my work is to REDACTED while home schooling my own family.

My reason for writing to yourself is to make you aware of the impact of the Governments decision to home early released prisoners within two local hotels, REDACTED . This together with the increase in escape artists from the REDACTED during the night, have had a profound impact on both my family and neighbourhoods life. The past 3 nights have been especially tough leaving both my husband and myself exhausted due to a lack of sleep, while we continue to work during the day.

I am also angry and dissapointed that those released early are not following the governments guidance as they roam around the area leave their handprints on the house/car door handles throughout the estate as caught on CCTV, thus further spreading the infection, while they try to steal from the very members of society who are working flat out to help support and protect others, maybe even members of their own families.

These decisions and actions have resulted in my husband having to spend £300 to install our own CCTV to protect our home and family, therefore I would like to ask the Government the following

- How long we expected to have to live like this?
- What are the reasons for this section of society to be housed within this area?
- Are Criminal justice social work staff aware of this behaviours?
- Has there been an increase in Police staffing to the area to account for this increase in crime?

I lookforward to your response.
REDACTED

Thu 26/03/2020 21:27

REDACTED

FAO Humza Yousaf

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Dear Humza,

I hope this email finds you well. After seeing Kenny MacAskills comments regarding prisoners being released who have less than three months sentence to complete, I am wondering what your stance on this is?

My brother has been an inmate in HMP Barlinne prison from REDACTED and is due to be released in REDACTED. Unfortunately, he has battled REDACTED for the majority of his life, and more recently became REDACTED. When he was sentenced in REDACTED, I felt relieved as I am confident this saved his life. Over the past few months he REDACTED and is clean of substances. He looks forward to be released and having a fresh start; he would like to get back into REDACTED work.

However, I am now extremely worried that being in prison is going to increase his chances of becoming seriously ill with the rising COVID-19 pandemic. I visited him on REDACTED and he had an idea this might be his last visit before the prison rightly stop them. He has become anxious on the phone, particularly at the lack of staff in the prison, the growing number of people in the prison who have tested positive for coronavirus and the impact that this is having on the prison as a whole.

I am concerned for the safety and wellbeing of all prisoners, prison staff and external professionals who regularly visit the prison. Are the prisoners going to be released early? How is Barlinne going to ensure a safe staff to prisoner ratio? I am only one inmates family member, and I don't doubt that there will be many more with similar worries.

Kind regards,
REDACTED

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Fri 03/04/2020 15:33

REDACTED

Prison service

First Minister firstminister@gov.scot

Dear First minister, I am writing in regards to and concern for my partner and his mental state within the prison system at this time. I'm fully aware of the pressure not only yourself but the government is under at this time and I appreciate the support you are giving to the nation at this time, but I feel the prisoners are being let down and giving false information and hope. My partner is currently serving REDACTED years REDACTED despite the recommendations of lawyer's and crimmal justice social works, his case was due to be taken to the high court in Edinburgh on the REDACTED. My partner has made his mistake and is being punished for his crime but here is no rehabilitation In place for not only my partner but many of the prisoners. The SPS are bursting at the seems with over crowding across the country and at times like now this isn't healthy not only for the prisoners but for prison staff. My partner is currently locked up 23 hours a day getting out for a period of 30minutes for a quick shower and a phone call. My partner suffers from server mental health issues REDACTED. we children at home whom are missing there father. We are used to visiting REDACTED and now ofcourse it's unsafe to do so. What will be put in place to maintain family contact? There has also been talk of release of prisoners? What will be the criteria for this? As I believe my partner is not a risk to the public as well as his lawyer and crimmal justice social work the sentence that was past was seen as harsh by a number of people, REDACTED. I would be grateful for any information on what is going to happen with in prison system as i am scared not only for my partner but all prisoners for there mental health they are being left behind doors without any information or explanation to what is acutely going on I understand that are crimmal and are being punished but they have every right to have there humans rights meet and unfortunately I don't feel at the moment the prison is meeting the needs.

*What is the criteria for release of prisoners (time scale of sentence)

* How are visits going to be replaced and how is family relationships going to be maintained

* How are they're basic human rights and needs going to be met.

Thank you for reading

Hope to hear from you soon .

REDACTED

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From: REDACTED
Sent: 12 April 2020 08:47
To: gaolinfo@sps.pnn.gov.uk
Cc: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>
Subject: Covid-19

To whom it may concern,

My name is REDACTED and my partner is currently serving a custodial sentence within HMP Low Moss. Given the recent circumstances due to the Covid-19 pandemic I have some concerns regarding prisoner welfare.

I understand this must be an extremely stressful and difficult time for all prison staff at the moment but it's also an extremely difficult time for people like me at home. I am looking for some clarity on the situation, how it is being handled within the prison? It is my understanding that prisoners are now in cells for the vast majority of the day and can only get limited phone calls and of course they are not allowed visits during this pandemic.

Going by the news in regards to early release for prisoners I know this is being used as a last resort and the government hope that is isn't an option that they need to take, my partners REDACTED and this was going forward and looking good before this pandemic happened, he was advised that he wouldn't be going as there would be no movements within the prison systems for 3 months and this could possibly be extended (his release date is REDACTED) so in fairness it wouldn't be worth his while. Does this mean that he could potentially be realised on electronic tag with home curfew?

My partner came into REDACTED I suffered from post natal depression REDACTED. I have bad anxiety and my depression is under control but I have my good and bad days. I REDACTED which helped me cope on a day to day basis. When I hear from now I feel fear and I'm worried about him residing in Low Moss due to this virus as it will spread like wild fire through any prison and I want my daughter to have a relationship with her dad and get him home.

I understand this is an extremely difficult time for all people with partners currently in prisons all over Scotland and the rest of the world but, everywhere else seems to be taking action and moving forward with early release etc and I feel that Scottish Prisons are not and it's cause an unsettling amount of worry. This is not normal times for anyone at the moment and the fear and uncertainty with this virus is driving everyone insane. I am just looking for clarification for my own frame of mind and too ensure my partner is currently in a safe environment and prisoners welfare and mental health is also being reviewed. We are all currently serving in HMP Coronavirus and I know how I feel just being stuck at home but, I would rather he was a prisoner in his own home (pardon the pun) then in a prison where the virus can spread like wild fire.

Can anybody help?

Kindest regards,
REDACTED

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-----Original Message-----

From: REDACTED

Sent: 07 May 2020 10:04

To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Prison Sentances

Hello,

My boyfriend was arrested REDACTED. he was then sentenced to REDACTED days for release today. he went to leave today and got gate arrested for a further REDACTED days. I have been following the things getting put in place to help prisoners/families during this pandemic as i personally have been affected by worry about him being inside when he has bad asthma and having less contact than normal. Just want to ask how the prison service thinks adding REDACTED days to a sentence is justified and worthwhile during this current crisis. Especially when you are talking about releasing prisons to help with the numbers inside. For me this is another person that does not have to be in there and increasing stress, negatively affecting mental health for him and his loved ones and increasing the risk of catching covid in there.

Thanks

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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Wed 08/04/2020 16:50

REDACTED

For Attention of Mr Humza Yousaf
Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

For Attention of Mr Humza Yousaf,

I fully appreciate this uncertain, ever evolving pandemic situation as myself i am working within a NHS Hospital.

Apologies for contacting you in such busy times, but i just have to put to you this email.

What i find extremely difficult to process is the rationale for fast track releasing prisoners, regardless of low risk, hdc approval.

I'm assuming those exceeding tariffs of long term sentences are being considered for release as it wouldnt be fair at other end of scale with high risk health conditions, upon parole board risk assessment being satisfactory.

Exactly how is this helping anyone with regards to covid-19 ?.

REDACTED – OUT OF SCOPE

Regarding Prisoners who have addictions its common knowledge their drug tolerance falls whilst in custody, upon liberation will use drugs and a sadly a high rate of overdoses requiring NHS treatment. So a faster and increased numbers lib date puts potential pressure on already under pressure NHS.

Unfortunately as you are aware the SPS has a "revolving door system" and personally i doubt all released will return to their civvy street abode and obey lockdown restrictions, although a minority may.

Many "revolving door" prisoners are too institutionalised and can not cope with life outside prison, again putting unnecessary pressure on NHS Mental health teams / addiction services, A&E. Police Scotland, Courts and Prison escort staff.

If you refer to this week's "The Digger" which i would never usually dream of giving the time of day. You will find a newly released prisoners version of events regarding covid-19, please note galavanting to Silverburn Shopping Centre for Digger Interview, this is proving my point how is early / fast track release helping anyone and definitely not abiding to lockdown rules. So their early release has been an absolutely pointless exercise.

Before I go any further i have experience working in the SPS Estate so am familiar with the operational regime.

REDACTED – OUT OF SCOPE

Managed correctly by SPS Prisons should be a fairly low risk of spreading covid-19, think about it logically if guidance is 2 week incubation period and you have been in prison longer than 2 weeks with no symptoms and no "outside contact" it can be assumed you are not positive. Going to Asda for your essential shop poses more risk.

However if 90 year old "Mary" is in a NHS hospital in a 4 bed bay and 87 year old Joan a fellow patient in bay develops symptoms , Mary has already been in same bay as "Joan" for 3 weeks. But nothing can be done, its put down as "one of these things".

Is the rationale 2 to a cell putting people at risk ?

How many double cell allocations still happen within for example HMP Barlinnie? Low Moss is mostly if not all single cell occupation.

So if you are a prisoner you can be released if low risk/ hdc approval to protect you, but if you are 90 year old Mary in 4 bed bay in NHS Hospital you will remain there as "one of those things" to be exposed to further potential positive covid-19 patients.

Something is definitely failing NHS patients here,

I'm really failing to see how this is helping anyone and believe me i am definitely not against rehabilitation and a small minority do cease offending.

REDACTED – OUT OF SCOPE

Thank you for taking the time out of your day to read this.

Kind Regards

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From: REDACTED
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 8:16:04 PM
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Prisoner in Lowmoss

Dear Mr Yousaf

I write to you in regard to the current situation of Covid -19 and my worry for REDACTED a prisoner at Lowmoss Prison (prisoner number REDACTED) a close family friend who I have known since he was 2years old.

My concern is you are unable to guarantee his safety against Covid-19 while he remains in prison,in close proximity to both prisoners and staff in a confined space.

I ask you what the Scottish Government's proposals are to guarantee his safety?

To allow him back to his family under restriction would prove a much safer option than the current situation. By showing compassion for both him and his family It would be less of a drain on our already struggling public service work force . We as a Nation are having to work within the rules but by showing flexibility to ensure as many lives as possible are protected. I disagree that REDACTED remaining in Lowmoss at the moment is the best way to safeguard his physical & mental health. He would be safer at home, posing less of a health risk to the overstretched staffing levels at Lowmoss. He could be much more useful in the community for example he could deliver groceries and medication to the elderly as he is not a threat or risk in the community, on the contrary he is a kind, helpful, caring young man. In times of such uncertainty we need to be helping and supporting each other as much as possible ,having to Introduce ways of coping that may not normally be a consideration. I respectfully ask you as a human being to show compassion for him, his family and also the prison guards who are having to work under huge pressure, to release him on license possibly with restriction to allow him to remain safe, to give something back to the community and to support people in the hugely challenging times ahead rather than him remaining in prison at higher risk of contacting Covid-19, at additional cost to the taxpayer. Other countries are releasing prisoners back into the community, we are a Nation that can promote positive ways of dealing with the situation we are living with and by adopting this practice we can be leading this change.

I await your response and would ask you to seriously consider a positive reply at this unprecedented time in our lives, to demonstrate compassion and humanity.

Yours sincerely

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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-----Original Message-----

From: REDACTED

Sent: 27 April 2020 15:34

To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>

Subject: Covid 19 impact on prisoners

REDACTED

Dear Mr Yousaf

I am writing to you today about the current COVID 19 situation and the impact it is having on prisoners and prisoners families.

My partner REDACTED is in HMP Low Moss. Three weeks before lockdown was announced he was to be REDACTED however due to a paperwork mistake he's REDACTED which means he's stuck where he is. Paperwork mistakes are commonplace in Low Moss and have happened on several occasions in the REDACTED years REDACTED has been there, the hardest one being when they said REDACTED could see me and his daughter in the hospital when she was born and left it last minute to tell him there had been a mistake in paperwork therefor he could not go.

I worry about how prisoners and staff can socially distance which to me is near on impossible and definitely not happening inside low moss. A lot of the prison population are blatantly ignoring social distancing. Stricter guidelines need to be put in place so the prison system does not create a second wave of Covid 19.

Keeping in touch has also become more difficult as prisoners are now only allowed out of there cells once a day for 30mins which means REDACTED can not always get on the phone as they are to busy. He was informed 4 weeks ago that mobile phones where to be introduced but this has not yet happened.

I understand that prisoners with less than 3 months of there sentence are to be released but REDACTED does not fall into this category as his release date is REDACTED. I would like to know what is in place for people like REDACTED and what is in place for them to receive updates on upcoming parole as he has a parole hearing in REDACTED. He has been unable to reach his community based social worker and can not get information from prison staff.

If the paperwork had been done in time REDACTED would not still be in low moss and at greater risk of infection, this needs to be addressed as it's a problem that we have faced on more than one occasion!

Prison is a hard enough environment never mind with covid 19 happening. It is not only harder mentally but there's also a greater risk of prisoners rioting as they have in HMP Addiewell and HMP Barlinnie, this also has to be addressed so that staff and prisoners are kept safe!

There has already been a death of covid 19 in low moss, the prison is even more dangerous now and I don't want anything to happen to REDACTED in there especially as he has worked so hard to get to a place to be released and live a good life in the community. I feel that people like REDACTED should also be considered for release

Yours Sincerely

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

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From: REDACTED

Sent: 31 March 2020 14:21

To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: REDACTED

Hi Mr Yousaf,

Hope you are keeping well during these difficult times.

I wrote to you previously regarding my partner, REDACTED, (letter attached) who is currently serving a prison sentence for REDACTED in Addiewell. I received a response and was given details of a Policy Officer who works for the SPS, he has asked me to get a signature from REDACTED to get REDACTED permission for him to divulge personal details to myself and MPs.

Although we are going through this process and it will take time I am deeply concerned about the Coronavirus and how it will effect REDACTED if he becomes infected in Addiewell. Firstly, REDACTED. Secondly, the prison is filthy he is only allowed out a short time to make a phone call and the phones etc aren't cleaned after each use and that's just the tip of the iceberg. Thirdly, his REDACTED due to this current situation and the unknown of what will happen in terms of his progression within the prison system.

REDACTED was told he would be at the open prison well before now and due to the Coronavirus outbreak, which is very unfortunate and no ones fault, he has no idea what will now happen. He has served REDACTED, he was REDACTED and his parole REDACTED this year.

He is not a threat to society and has a clean record within the prison as mentioned in my attached letter. He has completed all courses including studying towards his REDACTED. REDACTED is looking forward to his release from prison so he can obtain a job as an REDACTED health permitting.

I understand from the media some prisoners will be released from prison, I am crying out for your help here, I'm terrified he dies in prison due to his health issues. It also states in the media that if Coronavirus gets into a prison it will spread very easily and prisoners could become extremely ill. REDACTED was REDACTED last year and REDACTED I'm terrified if he has respiratory problems due to catching Coronavirus he will not be taken to hospital quickly enough.

Surely prisoners have human rights, I know they are in prison to be punished however I do believe their health and safety is paramount.

I'm sending you this email to ask for your help. I know you will be extremely busy due to the current national disaster but REDACTED is my fiancé he's my world and I would love to have him home safe and away from the real threat of catching Coronavirus within the prison and not getting the medical attention he may then need.

I would highly appreciate it if you could please listen to my plea and help us. He really is a sitting duck inside addiewell.

Look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

REDACTED – OUT OF SCOPE

Sun 29/03/2020 10:46

REDACTED

Open prisoners

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Hi there looking for some information going forward on what is going to happen with prison visits and home leaves for prisoners in the open estate.

As a partner of a prisoner there who has had over REDACTED leaves to date building a relationship back with myself and the kids which is deemed necessary to now have that taken away is not best in this current situation.

I feel in this trying time for the country that consideration should be put into place to license the prisoners that are low risk and the ones that can be licensed to home for the duration of this lockdown.

I feel as also being a key worker and having to home school on top of this would be beneficial to us a family in these circumstances.

This time of my partner being in the open estate is a time of being put back into The community ready for parole and rebuilding relationships as a family and to now have any physical contact taken away has now affected our children and if this goes on indefinitely will also affect mental health for us all.

I feel looking down the route of licensing them to home with strict conditions could help not only families but also minimise the risk of the staff up in the open estate.

I understand there is also closed prisons to consider in this but they have the facilities in place there going forward where closed visits can be put in place to see their families, the open estate don't have this.

This is such a trying time for a lot of families and would really like to see something put in place as prisoners and their families have human rights which need addressed.

Many thanks

REDACTED

Sent from my iPhone

From: REDACTED

Sent: 01 April 2020 15:39

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: VERY URGENT REPRESENTATIONS CONCERNING SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT EMERGENCY CORONAVIRUS LEGISLATION

<3 mins read

Dear Nicola, First Minister, , I am writing to make some urgent comments about the emergency Coronavirus legislation passing through the Scottish Parliament.

While drastic times require drastic measures, all care must be taken to retain as much as civil procedures, safeguards and checks and balances as possible, and to ensure full functionality of such is returned when the crisis is over.

I have had very little time to review this, receiving a cooy of the SPICE briefing today, so my scrutiny is very limited and possibly incomplete /inaccurate, however I would like to make a few brief comments for consideration.

* Firstly there seems to be significant provision for regular review of the legislation and whether necessary to continue. I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THAT ANY CONTINUATION OF MEASURES SHOULD NOT JUST BE RECONSIDERED BY PARLIAMENT BUT ALSO SHOULD REQUIRE AN OFFICIAL PUBLIC STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT ON SUCH AN UNDERTAKING, AND ITS JUSTIFICATION (AND ALLOWING REPRESENTATIONS TO BE MADE) - THIS WILL ENSURE THAT WHILE CORRECT AND SUFFICIENT PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES ARE HOPEFULLY TAKING PLACE, THE PUBLIC WILL ALSO FEEL THEY UNDERSTAND THE JUSTIFICATION AND NECESSITY FOR SUCH MEASURES, AND CAN STAND AS BEST PRACTICE TO GUARD AGAINST ANY GOVERNMENT USING A CRISIS FOR AUTHORITARIAN POWER GRABS OR PRACTICES.

REDACTED – OUT OF SCOPE

* The possibility of release of prisoners (under, and bound by certain circumstances), particularly unconditionally for those under 4 years, might be concerning for some victims and the community. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE TO HAVE AS PART OF THIS PROCESS THAT A REVIEW OF THE SOUNDNESS AND SAFETY OF THEIR RELEASE, WHICH I PRESUME WOULD HAPPEN AT THE TIME, BE REVIEWED AT SOME PREORDAINED TIME LATER, POSSIBLY PREDICTING WHEN THE CRISIS MAY BE ABATING OR OVER AND ALSO THAT CERTAIN REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES, COMMUNITY OR OTHER MEASURES BE ADMINISTERED AND EVALUATED AS BEING COMPLETED SATISFACTORILY, BEFORE UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE/DISCHARGE (SOME OF WHICH PERHAPS SCHEDULED FOR A MORE NORMAL, PRACTICAL TIME, AS MENTIONED) AS BENEFICIAL TO THE AIMS OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND APPROPRIATE AND PROPORTIONATE TO EACH CASE.

REDACTED – OUT OF SCOPE

Apologies for any errors and omissions.

Sincerely and appreciably REDACTED

From: REDACTED

Sent: 22 April 2020 09:28

To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Released Prisoners

I would appreciate an answer to this question please -Why are we flying in hundreds of Eastern Europeans to pick fruit instead of having the 450 released prisoners doing it instead?

People are angry.

Your faithfully

REDACTED

Tue 31/03/2020 18:29

From REDACTED

Emergency legislation

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

REDACTED – OUT OF SCOPE

You are now proposing cancers to course and seriously early release of convicted prisoners really??

The have the adacity to have an easter break as usual when the country is in the minute of a crisis yes make sure you get your priorities right bloody disgrace lack of leadership, responsibility and committment

From: REDACTED
Sent: 03 April 2020 17:26
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Subject: F.A.O. Humza Yousaf

Dear Mr Yousaf,

I write to you in your capacity as Justice Secretary, willing for measures to be put in place to assist prisoners during the Coronavirus outbreak.

I am the sister of an inmate, who is currently serving his sentence at HMP Barlinnie. My brother is a first time detainee and coping with life in a closed prison such as Barlinnie has been hard in itself for him. His small lifelines have been taken away over the past week or so, as prison staff absences, I believe according to reports, are at a rate of 25%.

All activities within the prison have been cancelled; gym, library, learning. He now is only allowed out of his small, shared cell to collect meals and for 30 minutes of fresh air outside. He has been told by prison officers that this time will reduce to 15 minutes when more staff absences occur. It is my understanding from the Scottish Government website however, that prisoners are entitled to a lawful minimum of 30 minutes outside each day. All visits, all telephone calls, all letters and book parcels by post are now banned. I completely understand the reasoning behind all of this, the virus spread has to be contained. However, the inmates are under severe mental stress, being locked up for 23 and a half hours per day. It is totally inhumane; a ticking timebomb. Please help them. Please help my brother.

News reports have mentioned the possibility of short term prisoners being released and I would urge you to do this. My brother does not fall into this category but I am hopeful that if this were to happen, then those remaining would at least be given some more time out of their locked cells.

My brother made a mistake in his life. I urge you not to make one of your own. Lives are at stake.

Regards,

REDACTED

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-----Original Message-----

From: REDACTED

Sent: 15 May 2020 16:07

To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Prisoners

Yousaf I'm writing this email following two deaths in Perth prison over weekend I'm scared I won't see my partner again he's doing REDACTED months of which he has to do REDACTED he has REDACTED months left but has a supervised release order which means he will be monitored in the community can he not be released to do his REDACTED months at home where he will still be monitored by local authorities. He's that scared he's turning down meals and showers because staff are infecting people in the prison there's no testing at all. I ask for you to consider people with REDACTED years sentence and REDACTED months left. Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

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From: REDACTED
Sent: 18 April 2020 00:29
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Prisoners

Dear Humza

I find it incredibly difficult to understand your logic behind supporting prisoners at this moment in time.

To think that prisoners will be supplied with phones (if they dont already have one in their hotel room) is an absolute insult to victims and families.

To even think of shortening a sentence at any time at all is also an absolute disgrace.

I will make my situation clear here, i am a key worker and do not follow any political party but out of all the announcements and changes as of recent, this is the most ridiculous idea i have heard since covid19 has landed in our country. What also disappoints me is the fact you are my local msp! Your backing of prisoners is just another typical action of a socialist SNP. Prisoners do not have the right to mobile phones, prisoners have no right to be released early and as for their families, prisoners should have considered their families before committing crimes.

Get a grip of yourself Humza.

An angry citizen and key worker based in Crookston, Glasgow

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

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From: no-reply@crm.wix.com <no-reply@crm.wix.com>
Sent: 11 April 2020 01:36
To: REDACTED
Subject: New message via your website, from REDACTED

REDACTED just submitted your form:
<https://www.humzayousaf.org/>

Message Details

Name: REDACTED
Email: REDACTED
Phone: REDACTED
Subject: Covid 19 in saughton

Message: My son is in saughton and I am extremely worried due to the death of an inmate. There are apparently several inmates now with this with reports of people having it on level 1 and 2 of hermiston block .It's also being reported that they no longer have hand sanitizer available and they are watering down disinfectant due to supplies running low prisoners are basically sitting ducks in prison this virus will spread rapidly and will kill many something needs to be done. I wish he could be tagged and put on house arrest I would be happy to ensure his safety.

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Tue 31/03/2020 14:04

REDACTED

Prisoner early release

Scottish Ministers [Scottish Ministers@gov.scot](mailto:Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot)

Institutions are clearly a breeding ground for any virus

Agriculture and fruit growers (and possibly other areas) are crying out for labour.

Why not commute sentences for those not a danger to the public into community service orders and deploy them where needed?

Regards

REDACTED

From: REDACTED **On Behalf Of** Lennon M (Monica), MSP
Sent: 23 April 2020 12:07
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Cc: REDACTED **Subject:** URGENT- COVID-19 Prisoner.

Dear Humza,

REDACTED

I have been contacted by the concerned family of REDACTED, who is currently serving his sentence in Addiewell Prison.

I have been advised that REDACTED has REDACTED left to service on his sentence.

REDACTED. His family are extremely concerned because he REDACTED and fear that things could take a turn for the worse. At this moment in time the only contact Mr REDACTED family have with him is through email. It is my understanding that his family write an email which is checked, censored and passed to him where he has the opportunity to respond, which is scanned and sent back to the family. They have been told that there is to be no contact by telephone.

REDACTED

I would grateful if you could urgently look into this case so that the family can have a phone call with their son, and also if you could clarify if Mr REDACTED would be eligible for early release under the emergency powers introduced last month. My constituents need reassurance about Mr REDACTED health and wellbeing at this worrying time and confirmation that his underlying health condition is taking into account.

Given the urgency of this matter I would appreciate confirmation of receipt. My office will also attempt to make contact with Addiewell Prison today.

Yours sincerely,

Monica

Monica Lennon MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament for Central Scotland
Scottish Labour Spokesperson for Health and Sport

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Humza Yousaf MSP
The Cabinet Secretary for Justice
The Scottish Parliament

Our Ref: REDACTED
21 April 2020

Email



Dear Humza,

Families of Scottish Prisoners

I have been contacted by two families in my constituency who are concerned about a family member who is currently serving a custodial sentence in a Scottish Prison.

Both families have asked if the Scottish Government intend to look at inmates who are nearing the end of their sentence or who have underlying health issues with a view to an earlier release date.

I would be very grateful if I could have an update of the position of the Scottish Prison Service and the Scottish Government, regarding any changes or measures taken to ensure the safety of prisoners or their release at this time.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,
REDACTED
Bob Doris MSP for Maryhill and Springburn (SNP)

From: REDACTED
Sent: 06 May 2020 14:22
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject:

SHAME ON YOU Yousaf, for letting prisoners out of prison. If anyone is injured because of these morons being allowed to walk the streets, then I hope they hold YOU responsible!!

Sent from Samsung tablet.

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Fri 01/05/2020 09:23

REDACTED

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Good morning its REDACTED here my daughter is currently serving prison time at cornton vale Prison and REDACTED but unfortunately we have not heard anything regarding this situation and all very anxious could you please get back to me thank you

--

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Sat 02/05/2020 17:26

REDACTED

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Hello my name is REDATED my daughter REDACTED we are all anxious about my daughter's welfare under the coronavirus as well REDACTED could you please help with this situation as am getting no answers from anyone but REDACTED could you get back to me on this matter thank you

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Sat 09/05/2020 17:01

REDACTED

REDACTED Imprisonment.

Scottish Ministers Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot

Hi my name is REDACTED. I am writing regarding of the unfairness the parole boards decision that was made on my long term partner, REDACTED. He was convicted on an incident last REDACTED. Really shouldnt have done, he also had a REDACTED. When brought to court the REDACTED case was thrown out and he was sentenced to REDACTED months for REDACTED , which he would have served REDACTED months. I have stood by REDACTED all this time REDACTED was sentenced to REDACTED . And to complete a course on decision making, which with the crisis at the moment dont know if that will even take place, something that could be done at home. Now since REDACTED release in REDACTED, he has not committed any violent offences, they have been REDACTED. The justice department sent an old report that was based on the REDACTED convictions, saying REDACTED, I am working with children and families and they support REDACTED to come home. REDACTED Justice Department have a great role to play on the decision making of the parole board. REDACTED worker REDACTED has worked with REDACTED all these years, and when it was time for REDACTED hearing he was allocated a new worker, think her name is REDACTED , she went to visit REDACTED once and the meeting didnt go well as she was saying REDACTED not to come home, she didnt even come to see me at house. REDACTED worked along with REDACTED and never once caused any problems, he came to house for visits, as REDACTED health poor, always cooperating with them REDACTED has REDACTED, and his mental health is poor, I am extremely concerned of him being locked up nearly 24 hours a day, away from his family, which seems so unfair, I know you introduced early release, but it doesnt look like REDACTED eligible because he on a licence, he is REDACTED, but lawyer said it will take a long time. I dont know what i think you could do to help, but I really feel this is a miscarriage of justice, we have not been treated fairly. Thanks for taking time to read this, would be appreciated if you can help us in anyway. The justice department has not done there job properly, and we are all being punished, nothing will bring this time as a family back.

REDACTED

From: REDACTED
Sent: 17 April 2020 16:40
To: Yousaf H (Humza), MSP <Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Re: Parole Sham

Mr Yousaf,

Dear Sir. Thank you for taking the time. I appreciate it and I also appreciate that none of the following is down to you personally. However as justice secretary, I contact you regarding my son REDACTED and my disgust at the parole board / System. My son was convicted in 2012 for REDACTED and correctly so at the time. He was sentenced to REDACTED years! Mainly as his offending behaviour at that time was atrocious. He was REDACTED years old. He was released on licence in REDACTED and in spite of his good intentions, was recalled early REDACTED for a REDACTED regarding a situation where he was REDACTED!

Now at HMP Grampian, REDACTED, he has saw his REDACTED and that along with the hopelessness of his situation, now REDACTED years for a breach of peace! has effected his mental well-being. Despite raising this numerous times, due to low staffing levels, it was a full REDACTED months before he was appointed a MHP. A time where family visits where his only comfort.

REDACTED – OUT OF SCOPE

I wouldn't like to believe it, but it feels targeted? Or is it just perhaps policy that as he was unfortunate enough REDACTED, he is to be detained further to offset any numbers of prisoners to be released due to virus concerns ?

Is the intention of prison to punish and hopefully rehabilitate people to become better citizens? Or simply crush them without regard to future prospects?

REDACTED

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