



SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC DEFENDER
MANOHAR RAJU – PUBLIC DEFENDER
MATT GONZALEZ – CHIEF ATTORNEY



March 12, 2020

David Jennings
Acting Field Office Director
Immigration & Customs Enforcement, Northern California
630 Sansome Street (5th Floor)
San Francisco, California 94111

Dear Field Office Director David Jennings,

On behalf of Alameda and San Francisco Public Defender clients now in your custody, we write to express our deep concern for their health and welfare as a result of the spread of the COVID-19 virus. As you are undoubtedly aware, this virus has been spreading across the globe and threatens the health of countless individuals in our community. People at heightened risk for the virus include: people over 60, those with heart or lung disease, diabetes, and immunosuppressed individuals who are suffering from cancer, HIV, or autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, or multiple sclerosis.

We have heard reports that immigration detention facilities lack access to disinfectant, hand sanitizers, and other necessary cleaning supplies to help prevent the spread of the virus. In addition, we are deeply concerned for those clients and other community members who are more susceptible to the virus due to age or underlying health conditions.

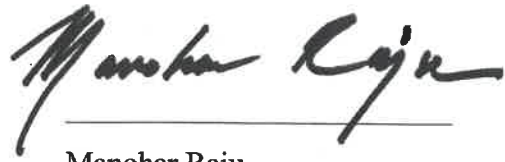
For this reason, we urge you to take immediate steps to secure the release of all vulnerable people in immigration detention centers. The DHS has the authority, and ample resources, to place individuals on supervised release. Given the current public health emergency, we ask that you exercise your powers in this regard as broadly as possible, so that our most vulnerable populations are not inadvertently being exposed to a life-threatening illness.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. We look forward to a speedy response given the circumstances.

Sincerely,



Brendon Woods
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