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Governor John Bel Edwards  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 94004  
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Governor Edwards,

Thank you for your continued efforts to protect Louisiana from COVID-19. I share your priority of delaying the spread of this deadly virus. In that light, I understand that there is discussion concerning the health of Louisiana's inmate population and the idea of releasing prisoners for their safety.

I strongly believe releasing prisoners is not the answer. At this time, our resources for public protection and safety are already strained. Our first responders, including our law enforcement officers, are in our communities everyday doing their best in light of this invisible enemy. As you know, many law enforcement officers have been tasked with securing testing sites, treatment sites and other virus related duties. To be blunt, Law enforcement resources are not in a position to be monitoring prisoners who have been released, or handling even a minor uptick in criminal activity as a result of thereof.

I have been advised that the Louisiana Supreme Court has been in constant discussion with the lower courts and our Distirct Attorneys in regards to pre-trial detainees. Their continued guidance to the lower courts is aimed at a reasonable means to address the criminal justice system in light of the Covid-19 health crisis.

Our Louisiana Sheriff's and the Department of Corrections have collectively put in place protocols that will allow them to deal with any outbreak that may occur at one of their facilities. At this time, there has been no significant outbreak among prisoners at any facility in Louisiana. Thus, any discussion of releasing prisoners is premature and could create a public-safety problem more dangerous than the potential public-health issue that exist in our prisons. A new crime wave in these perilous times would be disastrous.

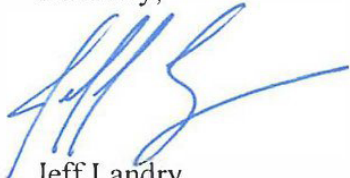
Additionally, prisoners should not be released without a thorough health screening, including testing for Covid-19. Using limited resources in an effort to release prisoners is surely counterproductive, as would be releasing prisoners without screening. Furthermore, I ask where will these people go? It seems extraordinarily short sighted not to think many of these prisoners

will end up homeless and on our streets. I am confident that DOC and our locally operated prisons are fully capable of isolating prisoners and protecting their health in a manner that is at least as effective as would be the case otherwise.

As we have discussed numerous times since the onset of this public health emergency, I am committed to working closely with you to ensure all actions taken remain legal and are in the best interest of the entire public. I strongly encourage you to not make the mistakes of other jurisdictions and do all you can to prevent the early release of Louisiana's criminals during this crisis. At a time of such of uncertainty as it relates to our State's economy, health care, and public safety – it is imperative we do not take actions that would further exacerbate the problem.

Thank you for your utmost consideration of my request. I look forward to discussing this and other ways we can protect the well-being of our State's people.

Sincerely,



Jeff Landry  
Attorney General

cc: Louisiana Supreme Court  
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