



August 14, 2019

The Honorable William P. Barr  
Attorney General of the United States  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Hugh J. Hurwitz  
Acting Director, Bureau of Prisons  
320 First St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20534

Dear General Barr and Director Hurwitz:

Exactly two months ago, I sent you the attached letter, asking you to investigate the death of Frederick Preston Turner. Mr. Turner died in his cell in the U.S. Penitentiary in Florence, Colo., on June 13, 2019.

I understand that you have ordered an immediate investigation into the death of Jeffrey Epstein. Mr. Turner could not be more different than Mr. Epstein. Mr. Turner is not alleged to have hurt anyone. Mr. Turner was not a billionaire with friends in high places. And Mr. Turner was never given a lenient plea deal by federal prosecutors; to the contrary, he was sentenced to 40 years in federal prison for a low-level drug offense. Yet Mr. Turner's life is no less important than Mr. Epstein's, and his death is no less tragic. Mr. Turner's family fought for months to have him moved from USP Florence in an attempt to save his life. They deserve answers as to why their request was ignored.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin A. Ring  
President, FAMM





June 14, 2019

The Honorable William P. Barr  
Attorney General of the United States  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C.

Hugh J. Hurwitz  
Acting Director, Bureau of Prisons  
320 First St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20534

Dear General Barr and Director Hurwitz:

I am writing to ask you to investigate the death of Frederick Preston Turner, who was found unresponsive in his cell in the U.S. Penitentiary in Florence, Colo., on June 13, 2019 and what the Bureau of Prisons could have done to prevent it. Every prison death is tragic, but the circumstances of Mr. Turner's death raise important questions about Bureau of Prisons (BOP) policies and practices.

Mr. Turner, Reg. No. 91536-083 was sentenced to 40 years for trafficking in methamphetamine and two violations of 18 U.S.C. § 924(c). At sentencing, Judge T.S. Ellis III of the Eastern District of Virginia recommended that Mr. Turner be placed in a facility as close to Salt Lake City, Utah as possible "commensurate with his minimal security needs." Mr. Turner was instead transferred to the high security facility USP Florence. Immediately upon entering USP Florence, Mr. Turner and his family members contacted us and notified us that he was facing intense pressure to join a gang within this facility, and credible threats to his safety if he did not. Mr. Turner had no history of violence, and his entire criminal record comprised two misdemeanor convictions for driving without a license. His current conviction was related to a drug addiction that he was unable to control prior to his arrest and subsequent conviction. He never brandished or discharged a firearm or used threats or violence against others in the course of his offense – or, indeed, during the course of his life. Mr. Turner's § 924(c) charges were related to his delivery of a package including a firearm.

Prior to his incarceration, he worked in the caring profession as a licensed health care assistant, a behavioral health specialist, and a psychiatric technician. Given his nonviolent tendencies and background, Mr. Turner refused the pressure to join the gang. As a result, threats against his life intensified. Fearing for his safety, Mr. Turner's family, with FAMM's assistance, sought a transfer to a lower-security facility by way of a congressional inquiry from the office of U.S. Representative Rob Wittman (VA-1) on October 22, 2018, but the BOP took no action notwithstanding the credible threats to his safety of which the BOP had been made aware.



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**Families for Justice Reform**

FAMM strongly urges you to conduct an investigation into Mr. Turner's death and focus on the following questions:

1. Why was Mr. Turner sent to USP Florence, which is well known as one of the most dangerous prisons in the federal system, given his known behavioral and mental health history, minimal criminal record, and nonviolent role in his offense? What factors justified the decision to incarcerate Mr. Turner at a U.S. penitentiary rather than a lower-security facility?
2. Did corrections staff observe threats to Mr. Turner and if so, when, and what actions were taken to ensure his safety?
3. When did Mr. Turner first alert USP Florence staff to the pressure he was facing to join a gang, and the threats against his life?
4. What action, if any, did USP Florence staff and/or other BOP officials take to protect Mr. Turner's safety?
5. Did Mr. Turner seek or was he otherwise offered secure housing? If so, was he granted or denied secure housing, and did he avail himself of it?
6. Did Mr. Turner seek or was he otherwise offered transfer to another facility? If so, why was the transfer not granted or made?
7. On October 22, 2018, U.S. Representative Rob Wittman (VA-1) sent a congressional inquiry to BOP officials regarding Mr. Turner's incarceration. What was the BOP's response to this inquiry? What action, if any, did BOP take in light to this inquiry?

This investigation and your answers to these questions will be important not only to Mr. Turner's family, but to the thousands of families whose loved ones are incarcerated in similar institutions. Please contact us if we can be of assistance to you in this matter and thank you for considering our concerns.

Sincerely,



Kevin A. Ring  
President, FAMM