



Family Of Medically Vulnerable Former U.S. Congressman Calls For Investigation Into 'Cruel And Unusual Punishment'

Published: June 4, 2020 at 12:46 p.m. ET

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HOUSTON, June 4, 2020 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- HOUSTON, June 4, 2020 /PRNewswire/ - The wife of an imprisoned former U.S. Congressman and other community leaders called for an investigation by the Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General, into allegations of the aborted transfer to home confinement and inadequate medical care of an imprisoned former U.S. Congressman.

Steve Stockman, 63, a former Representative for Texas' 9th and 36th congressional districts, was convicted in 2018 of diversion of federal election donations. He is an inmate at the Federal Correctional Institution in Beaumont.

In April, Stockman's caseworker advised he'd made the list for transfer to home confinement under the CARES Act due to his advanced age and health conditions, including asthma-scarred lungs, hypertension and diabetes.

Stockman signed documents to begin the transfer process. When he reported, with other non-violent offenders on the list, for quarantine prior to being sent home, he was told his name had been removed from the list. He was allegedly told that he is safer in prison and he had not served 50% of his sentence.

This, despite the fact that other inmates who allegedly served less 50% were in home confinement. Bureau of Prisons Director Michael Carvajal told senators Monday that percentage served is no longer a factor in transfers to home confinement.

"Steve is now the only insulin-dependent diabetic over 60 remaining there. All other elderly diabetic inmates have been, or are being, moved to home confinement because it's impossible to social distance in prison," Patti Stockman, his wife, said.

She added that Stockman goes without insulin for up to 15 hours due to improper administration protocols. Additionally, prescriptions such as Trulicity, Novalog, Aricept and Lantus are withheld from her husband, according to Patti.

"Having a medically vulnerable senior sit in prison without adequate medical care during a pandemic, while his peers are sent to home confinement, is cruel and unusual punishment. Don't send him home to me in a body bag," Patti said.

U.S. District Judge Michael Shea, ruling on a similar case, said last month that such "failures amount to deliberate indifference to a substantial risk of serious harm to inmates in violation of the Eighth Amendment," adding that the Warden in that case "failed to implement what appears to be the sole measure capable of adequately protecting vulnerable inmates."

"The Warden waiting until the very last second to deny his transfer smacks of political gamesmanship," Benjamin Wetmore, an attorney and key government witness in Stockman's case, said.

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