

October 30, 2015

Sally Q Yates
Deputy Attorney General
Office of the Deputy Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear Deputy Attorney General Yates:

As the person with primary responsibility for the Bureau of Prisons (BOP), we write to urge that you consider someone outside the box in selecting the new Bureau Director.

The National Association of Women Judges' Women in Prison Committee began in 1992 to urge BOP Director Kathy Hawk Sawyer to focus the Bureau on the issues of women offenders and their children. We still have significant differences with the Bureau on a number of serious issues. However, under Director Charles E. Samuels, Jr. the Bureau has evidenced an increased sensitivity to the issue of women offenders and has made an effort to initiate positive policy changes. In particular, for the very first time, the Bureau has appointed a well-qualified person as Administrator, Female Offender Branch, and has given the Administrator status and staff. The Bureau has consistently been willing to engage in dialogue, and has allowed women judges to visit correctional facilities.

There is much that needs to be done, but we are encouraged by the Bureau's willingness to finally do some positive things after so many years. We strongly encourage the Bureau to hire an individual who will be new to the Bureau so that she, or he, may bring a new perspective, a new vitality, and above all new ideas to the Bureau--so that the those defendants who are in its care will be given more access to their families (in particular their children) and educational and vocational training which will enable them to obtain meaningful jobs in their communities when they are released.

If you would like us to provide more specific, or to meet with you or your staff, we would be happy to do so.

Thank you for your consideration.



Hon. Lisa Walsh
President, National Association of Women Judges
Eleventh Judicial Circuit, Florida

Enc: *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*, by Bryan Stevenson