



April 6, 2020

BlueMountain Capital  
280 Park Avenue  
12th Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
(212) 905-3900

Dear Andrew Feldstein,

The COVID-19 pandemic has overwhelmed many public systems, and the correctional system is no different. Prisons and jails are breeding grounds for infection as people are crowded into tight quarters and forced to share cells and showers, making social distancing impossible and allowing the disease to spread rapidly.

We are writing to demand that you take action to address the predatory behavior of your portfolio company: Corizon Health. Corizon is using the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to further exploit incarcerated people and their families, which will cost people their health and wellbeing, and even their lives.

For years, Corizon, one of the nation's largest correctional healthcare providers, and its predecessors have put profit over their patients. Under your firm's ownership, Corizon has been routinely called out in litigation and media for providing substandard and inadequate healthcare, padding its bottom line by understaffing medical personnel in facilities, and denying patients critical care.<sup>1</sup> In normal circumstances, these practices put lives at risk. But today, they could kill thousands of people.

We know this because these cost-cutting measures led to disastrous consequences during previous outbreaks of infectious diseases. For instance, when Hepatitis C spread through Idaho prisons, Corizon allegedly refused to provide treatment to hundreds of sick people, allowing diseases to spread and people to suffer.<sup>2</sup> Now, faced with COVID-19, the corporation stands to repeat its mistakes—unless you immediately implement changes.

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<sup>1</sup> Coll, Steve. "The Jail Health-Care Crisis." *The New Yorker*, 25 June 2019, [www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/03/04/the-jail-health-care-crisis](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/03/04/the-jail-health-care-crisis).

<sup>2</sup> Lowe, Emily. "Over 100 Inmates Sue IDOC, Health Provider over Hep C Care." *Idaho Press*, 31 Aug. 2019, [https://www.idahopress.com/news/local/over-inmates-sue-idoc-health-provider-over-hep-c-care/article\\_936d35fa-31f6-52f8-893d-474efa76f5c2.html](https://www.idahopress.com/news/local/over-inmates-sue-idoc-health-provider-over-hep-c-care/article_936d35fa-31f6-52f8-893d-474efa76f5c2.html)

To make matters worse, many in the prison healthcare industry are using the pandemic to renegotiate contracts to make more money, using incarcerated peoples' lives as bargaining chips. Several weeks ago, Wexford Health Sources threatened to walk away from a contract within months unless the agency increased its pay.<sup>3</sup> This predatory behavior is indefensible.

Effective healthcare is the most important need during a pandemic in any context. But the need is particularly great in prisons and jails, where contagious diseases are nearly impossible to contain. And outbreaks in facilities will quickly spread beyond prison and jail walls as correctional officers return to their homes each day, potentially carrying COVID-19 back to the public. To protect the incarcerated population and the broader public, correctional healthcare providers must act immediately.

To protect the lives of the hundreds of thousands of people who depend on Corizon, you must immediately direct executive management at Corizon to:

- Release a company-wide comprehensive emergency response plan,
- Fully staff all contracted facilities with medical providers,
- Instruct medical staff to work with correctional administrators to develop facility-specific emergency response plans,
- Waive all medical co-pays,
- Provide testing for COVID-19 at all contracted facilities,
- Prepare quarantine protocols that avoid solitary confinement, provide access to communication, and protect the rest of the population,
- Prepare beds in medical units for COVID-19 patients, and
- Contact local government officials and hospitals to ensure that the incarcerated population is part of their emergency response plan.

Through Corizon, BlueMountain's portfolio contains a company that exclusively targets incarcerated people and their families to generate revenue and build wealth. You now have a responsibility to protect the population you have been profiting off of. You must take immediate steps to prevent and address their exploitation during COVID-19.

We are open to dialogue on the above matters, and in the meantime, we will be sharing this letter with BlueMountain's investors and other private equity firms that own prison service corporations. We are also contacting the following bodies with similar demands: Federal Communications Commission, Federal Bureau of Prisons, National Governors' Association, United States Conference of Mayors, and National Sheriffs' Association.

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<sup>3</sup> Learn-Andes, Jennifer. "Luzerne County Still Exploring Inmate Health Care Vendor Options." *Times Leader*, 22 Mar. 2020, [www.timesleader.com/news/777373/luzerne-county-still-exploring-inmate-health-care-vendor-options](http://www.timesleader.com/news/777373/luzerne-county-still-exploring-inmate-health-care-vendor-options).

In closing, we urge you to use this moment to reevaluate your investment portfolio and the role BlueMountain plays in upholding the nation's long-lasting carceral crisis that has decimated communities of color and poverty. Until you exit this industry entirely, you will have a hand in exploiting vulnerable people, exacerbating racial disparities, separating loved ones, and driving families into poverty. You have a choice. This will be your legacy.

Sincerely,

Bianca Tylek  
Executive Director  
Worth Rises

Jim Baker  
Executive Director  
Private Equity Stakeholder Project

Scott Roberts  
Senior Director of Criminal Justice Campaigns  
Color of Change

Randi Weingarten  
President  
American Federation of Teachers

CC:

James Hyman  
Chief Executive Director of Corizon Health  
103 Powell Court  
Brentwood, TN 37027  
[JamesHyman@corizonhealth.com](mailto:JamesHyman@corizonhealth.com)