

DECLARATION OF DEMARIS CARTER

I, Demaris Carter, certify under penalty of perjury that the following statement is true and correct pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746.

1. My name is Demaris Carter. I am 35 years old and of sound mind.
2. I'm currently detained in the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison. I've been in the jail since I was arrested on July 21, 2020. Right now, I'm on the Q8 line, which shares a day room with Q7. The lines are almost full—I'd say there are about 220 people in here with me on Q7-8.
3. There are people with COVID-19 on this line with me. In fact, there is a guy about 5 beds away from me who has a cough and cannot smell or taste anything. Even though the nurses come onto the line two times a day for pill call, they are not testing people for coronavirus and not taking our temperatures. It seems that they don't care whether the virus spreads and I get infected or not.
4. When I first arrived at the jail, I was placed in B4. Me and about 24 other people were told we were under quarantine and would be for 14 days. The jail placed 2 guys who tested positive for COVID on B3.
5. The jail is not taking the necessary precautions to stop the spread of the virus. When guards did roll call on B3, they did so in full protection suits. But after walking onto the B3 line to do that roll call, they walked right over to B4 with the same protective gear on and did roll call on B4!
6. The guards force us to stand close together during roll call, and the nurses do the same for pill call. The guards wear masks some of the time, but not always. They gave me a disposable mask to wear on B4, which I had to wear for the 14 days I was there. They gave me a cloth mask when I was moved to Q8, and they have not given me a clean one or a different one in the week or so I have been here. Only about 30% of the detainees I am with wear masks.
7. It is not possible to social distance on B4 or on Q7-8. This is especially true on the Q line. The bunk beds are about three feet apart, and the lower and upper bunks are only about two feet apart when you're lying down. When you're sleeping, you're basically always a few feet away from someone else. And it's worse during the day, when we're all in the day room (the communal space where we all have to go when we're not sleeping).
8. B4 is infested with rats, spiders, and roaches. The showers are full of mold. The Q lines' showers are filthy and full of mold too. You can't distance in the bathrooms on

Q. It's always a traffic jam in there because of how many people need to use the bathroom. There's only about eighteen or twenty inches between the shower heads, so if someone is in the shower next to you they're only about eight inches away. All the sinks are about four to six inches apart—they're so close that water splashes from one guy to the next when you're using them. Water splashes from one shower to the next, too. It's even worse because lots of these things are broken. Two to three toilets are broken, and four sinks are broken. Some of the sinks don't even drain, so you have to knock the water out of the sink onto the floor and try to clean it.

9. I have a full-time construction job at Performance of Perfection that supports my girlfriend and 7 kids, including a newborn. In addition to work, I was attending school at the Ironworkers Local before the pandemic stopped classes. I was supposed to start the welding and pipefitting classes back up on August 3, but instead I am stuck in this jail. I need to get out of this jail and support my family.
10. The day before I was arrested, I went to the courthouse to pay my final \$897 restitution payment for a 2014 monetary abuse case, but the people in the courthouse could not find the proper records to allow me to make the payment. When the police came to my house to execute a search warrant on my 14 year old stepson, they took the money and arrested me because they claim they found drug paraphernalia and a gun. I feel like I should not be here because the search and arrest were wrong, but I have no lawyer to argue the case for me and get me out.

This declaration was orally sworn to by Demaris Carter on August 15, 2020, because the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison is currently not permitting documents to be exchanged for signature.

Under penalty of perjury, I declare that I have read the foregoing in its entirety to Demaris Carter on August 15, 2020.


By:
David Utter

Date: August 13, 2020