

I would like to ask that the NYC Board of Corrections reject the two Continuing Variance Requests put before you this week that would make drastic and unnecessary changes to the mail and package policies throughout the NYC system.

My non-profit organization, [Books to Prisoners](#), has 50 years of experience of sending contraband-free mail and packages to NYC detainees. By the requestor giving the Board only three (3) examples of contraband being caught by their mailrooms they are not only indicating that their processes for preventing any contraband work, but also that the cost and efforts of these changes outweigh the size of the problem. Similar 'scan and shred' mail programs implemented at other facilities have not seen a major reduction in contraband, but the impact of detainees not being able to hold or possess the letters and pictures from their loved ones is immeasurable and will affect the death rates by suicide.

Further, by preventing non-profit organizations from sending packages to your facilities would prevent indigent prisoners from accessing quality reading, religious and educational materials. Requiring financial purchases of reading materials by people who don't have incomes or family support systems is unreasonable and further creates inequality in your programs.

I strongly request that you deny/reject the two Requests for Continuing Variance outright when they come before you:

1. **Continuing Variance Request to Board of Correction Minimum Standards Section 1-11(e)(1)(i) Regarding Correspondence**
2. **Continuing Variance Request to Board of Correction Minimum Standards Section 1-12(a) Regarding Packages**

~Jeff West

Books to Prisoners - Board Vice President