



Human Rights Defense Center

DEDICATED TO PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS

April 1, 2015

**SENT VIA EMAIL AND
POSTAL MAIL**

Phil Mendelson, Chairman
D.C. Council
1350 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

RE: Corizon Health and D.C. Jail Medical Contract

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

On behalf of the Human Rights Defense Center (HRDC), I previously contacted you and other members of the Council concerning a contract with Corizon Health, Inc. to provide medical care for the D.C. jail system. As you are aware, this \$66.1 million three-year contract, recommended by the Office of Contracting and Procurement, would replace Unity Health Care as the jail system's current medical and mental health provider.

In my prior correspondence I noted some of the many problems that Corizon has faced in other jurisdictions, including contract terminations and extensive litigation, as described in the [March 2014 cover story](#) in *Prison Legal News*, HRDC's monthly publication.

As this issue is again before the Council after Mayor Bowser reintroduced the Corizon contract, I am again contacting you and the other Councilmembers to express our opposition to allowing Corizon, a for-profit company, to provide medical care to D.C. jail prisoners.

Specifically, I would like to draw your attention to the following non-exhaustive list of news reports from a number of jurisdictions and sources – all involving Corizon – that have been published since my last letter submitted to the Council:

March 28 – [Former Allegheny County Jail psychiatrist banned for bringing cigarettes to work](#)

March 26 – [A Fresno County jail inmate is claiming abuse at the hands of a jail doctor](#)

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March 25 – [*Minn. DOC settles lawsuit with family of prisoner who died after being denied treatment*](#)

March 8 – [*Lawsuit: Corizon Doctor Tells New York City Inmate to Throw Severed Finger in Garbage*](#)

March 3 – [*Construction Worker Bled to Death from Untreated Ulcer at Rikers: Lawsuit*](#)

March 3 – [*Rikers Healthcare Provider Corizon Under Fire at City Council Hearing*](#)

March 2 – [*City Council to Demand More Oversight of Rikers Health Care Provider*](#)

March 2 – [*Inmate care in Allegheny County Jail generates worries*](#)

March 1 – [*Opinion/Column: Company once served Fluvanna women's prison*](#)

March 1 – [*Outsourcing neglect: Corizon's for-profit healthcare endangers prison inmates and workers*](#)

February 20 – [*Florida prisons chief to seek revamp of health care contracts*](#)

February 19 – [*Former Corizon Doctor Accused of Molesting Scores of Prisoners Served With Two New Lawsuits*](#)

February 10 – [*Corizon, Alameda County pay \\$8.3 million to settle jail death lawsuit*](#)

Further, I noticed that Corizon (which is headquartered in Tennessee) has partnered with MBI Health Services, LLC, which it described as a “local small disadvantaged business enterprise” in a [March 12 press release](#). MBI Health Services, LLC is apparently a subsidiary or affiliate of [MacArthur & Baker International, Inc.](#), a Maryland-based firm. The corporate address for MacArthur & Baker, 7200 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 702 in Bethesda, Maryland, is the same as the address for the registered agent of MBI Health Services in Maryland.

Both companies share the same registered agent, both in Maryland and D.C. That registered agent, John Kamya, has two different addresses – one in Maryland and one in D.C. Mr. Kamya is [listed](#) as an [employee](#) of MacArthur & Baker and, in a recent [letter](#) to Councilmember David Grosso, identified himself as the President/CEO of MBI Health Services. Thus, it appears that while MBI Health Services is incorporated in D.C., it is less of a “local” business and more a subsidiary or affiliate of MacArthur & Baker, a Maryland-based firm, and that Mr. Kamya is affiliated with both. I contacted the companies for clarification but received no response.

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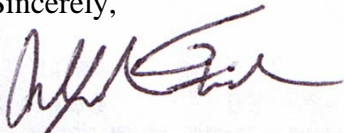
In closing, I understand that both Corizon and its critics have their own agendas. Corizon, as a for-profit company, wants the \$66.1 million contract; it is not seeking to provide medical care to D.C. prisoners for altruistic or humanitarian reasons. Its critics, including HRDC, believe that private companies should not provide correctional services, including medical care for prisoners, because incarceration-related services are a responsibility of our government and should not be contracted out to the private sector for the purpose of generating corporate profit.

Due to these competing agendas, I suggest that the Council hear testimony from former prisoners and their surviving family members who have firsthand experience with medical care provided by Corizon – not those selected by the company, but rather those who have suffered serious injuries and the family members of prisoners who have died due to grossly inadequate care provided (or not provided) by Corizon. Such firsthand testimony would provide a relevant side to the contract debate that the Councilmembers have not yet heard.

Additionally, either I or another member of HRDC's staff would be glad to provide testimony to the Council concerning our coverage of Corizon and its predecessor companies, Prison Health Services and Correctional Medical Services. HRDC has reported on privatized medical care in prisons and jails for over two decades, through *Prison Legal News*.

Thank you for your continued attention with respect to the Council's consideration of whether to contract with Corizon for the provision of medical care in the District's jail system.

Sincerely,



Alex Friedmann
Associate Director, HRDC

cc: D.C. Councilmembers
D.C. Corrections Information Council