This story was told by a person incarcerated at Calipatria State Prison.</br></br>

Dear PrisonPandemic,</br></br>

As I recollect when this pandemic first occurred and got serious to me. About “Feb 2020”, here in Calipatria State Prison. Watching the news, I knew this was a lethal virus. I was concerned for my children, family and myself. All correctional officers wore no mask.</br></br>

So some inmates, including me, started coming out of our cells with bandanas over our faces. To protect ourselves from this new virus called “COVID-19.” We were told by correctional officers and their higher rankings. We would receive a (115) disciplinary write up if we proceed to wear coverings over our nose and mouth!</br></br>

I thought to myself, I could get time added to my sentence for trying to protect myself. I didn’t understand, was I the only person seeing these people in the world dropping like flies and getting packed in ice containers by the hundreds and thousands?</br></br>

A couple to a few weeks later, the same people who told us we would get disciplinary actions towards us for wearing coverings over our faces were now informing us that we will get disciplinary actions towards us if we don’t wear face coverings. That’s when I knew they received the memo.</br></br>

I had no problem with complying with the request. The officers made us wear masks but they were not wearing them yet. Until inmates started to complain. Because they are the source of how the virus will be passed to us. A week or two later, inmates and COs as well were all wearing masks, it was mandatory.</br></br>

This was in April 2020. I give this prison credit for the fast response on mask. Because I was also aware of all the other prisons in the U.S.A. who didn’t have masks at all and had very high rates of infections and deaths. Everything was running well until about september or October 2020 and beyond.</br></br>

This is when the infections started to be in the same building as me and buildings nearby and also other yards on the same facility that I am in. It also was a “big problem” with false positives as well. They have a building for inmates that are (COVID-19) positive. Then you have inmates with false positives that now have and must go live and be around inmates who are really positive, sick and infected.</br></br>

Now their chances of being positive are very, very high. Some inmates have become positive because of these types of situations and non-active corona tests and swab kits that needed to be voided! It was starting to be clear to me (CDRC) wasn’t ready for the pandemic and couldn’t manage or handle it, and the last thing they're doing is helping rehabilitate anyone!</br></br>

Now all inmates are aware this virus is serious and not fake at all. US inmates used our common sense and know by being on “23 hour” lock down. We were and are on quarantine way before the pandemic even occurred. The only way we can be infected is from the correctional officers and other staff that work in this prison.</br></br>

Even to this day, there are COs around here that wear their mask on their face but not over their nose and mouth. Just a week or two ago, an inmate in my building that I converse with, wrote up a CO in our building with a (602) grievance form for not having his mask on. This same CO tested positive for “coronavirus” two to three months ago.</br></br>

When an inmate does it, the same act. We will get a disciplinary write up. So it’s really saying, “Hey inmate, put your mask on or I’m going to write you up for not protecting yourself from a virus that I’m exposing you to. Also I’m still not wearing my mask because I am the authority over you!”</br></br>

Due to all the false positives I have been put on quarantine back to back to back. Three times in a row for 14 days each and because of these false positives, I wasn’t able to call my family October-November. All the inmates don’t trust the test, so we refused testing as a whole. Because of false positives, we can now become infected because we are placed in a building with real positives that can cause us death or harm to our health.</br></br>

We are rushed and penalized for our time in the shower or on the phone when we want to wipe them down and disinfect. When inmates catch the virus, we don’t get special treatment or a ventilator. We stay sick in a cell on our deathbed while nurses come and check our temperature daily. Nothing more, nothing less!</br></br>

The best thing about the pandemic now is that we are offered vaccines weekly. Most inmates are skeptical about that as well. If you can’t swab us right and give us accurate test results, why should we trust you with a needle and an unknown medicine? CDCR is not to be trusted!