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Practice Limited to Federal Criminal Law
Legal Assistant:
Jie Zheng, M.A.

September 18th, 2025

William K. Marshall III
Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons
320 First Street, NW
Washington, DC 20534

**RE: REQUEST FOR MEETING & INTERVENTION ON
KEITH RANIERE, INMATE IDENTIFICATION NO.: 57005-177**

Dear Director Marshall:

My name is Alan Ellis, and I am an attorney who has spent over 50 years specializing in federal sentencing, Bureau of Prisons (BOP) matters, appeals, and post-conviction remedies. In that time, I have analyzed thousands of cases, advised judges, attorneys, prosecutors, and U.S. Probation Officers nationwide, and co-authored the Federal Prison Guidebook: Sentencing and Post-Conviction Remedies. I am a former president of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and received a Fulbright Award. I have held leadership roles in the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, and served as a Visiting Professor of Law in China and taught at the Wharton School of Business and Finance at the University of Pennsylvania and Golden Gate University School of Law.

I am one of the attorneys involved in the post-conviction representation of Keith Raniere, 57005-177, who is serving out his 120 year sentence at USP Tucson. Specifically, one of my roles is to assist Mr. Raniere with his BOP matters, and I have done so since 2022.

I am writing to bring to your personal attention ongoing BOP retaliation against Mr. Raniere, which began under your predecessors after he began to expose extensive government misconduct in his case. This misconduct has been verified by five former FBI experts; is described by three former U.S. Attorneys as the most "widespread government malfeasance" they have ever seen.¹

¹ Notably, this malfeasance overlaps with the very same actors behind the lawfare against President Trump, including Jack Smith, Merrick Garland, Christopher Wray, Letitia James, and Alvin Bragg.

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Past President, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

*Of Counsel attorneys work with The Law Offices of Alan Ellis on a case-by-case basis.

Of immediate concern is the extreme difficulty we have in securing legal calls with Mr. Ranieri, which he is entitled to pursuant to BOP Policy. We have multiple post-conviction efforts underway and they are accelerating – a weekly legal call is necessary to effectuate proper legal representation. Oral arguments on his indirect appeal are scheduled to be heard before the Second Circuit Court of Appeals on October 21st, 2025 (*USA v. Keith Ranieri, AKA Vanguard*, 24-778-CR(L)). It takes an excessive number of requests by Ms. Blum, another BOP consultant, Craig Rothfeld, and myself to Mr. Ranieri’s Correctional Counsel and BOP Legal to secure sporadic legal calls. This is unprecedented in my experience and should not be necessitated.

In the past, Mr. Ranieri was receiving weekly legal calls and I would appreciate this being reinstated and speaking with him prior to oral argument. In addition, the BOP is continuing to violate the confidentiality of Mr. Ranieri’s legal mail by opening it outside of his presence and photocopying it, including my own legal mail which I have sent to Mr. Ranieri.

Due to the fact that Mr. Ranieri has sought to expose the government’s egregious misconduct in his matter, he has faced severe retaliation in custody, including the following flagrant actions by the BOP, all prior to your leadership:

- Opening, photocopying, and **forwarding his legal mail to the prosecution.**²
- Scrubbing his contact list within 24 hours of his first major post-conviction challenge exposing FBI evidence tampering.
- Keeping him in the Special Housing Unit (SHU) in non-disciplinary segregation for **8 months** despite clearance to return to the general population within 10 days- following additional post-conviction motions and a lawsuit against the BOP alleging retaliation.
- Repeatedly attempting to transfer him to a Communications Management Unit (CMU) — a designation typically reserved for terrorists to restrict their communication.³
- **Denial of all social visitation for over 3 years**, which is ongoing.

Apart from being demonstrably innocent of the charges and excessively sentenced⁴ — Mr. Ranieri’s conviction rests on evidence the prosecution itself described as “at the heart” of their case. Post-conviction, multiple former FBI examiners determined that said evidence, the heart, was falsified and planted. This was verified by an independent expert retained by *Newsweek*.

² Apart from being demonstrably innocent of the charges — many of which were patently absurd though exaggerated by headlines — Mr. Ranieri’s conviction rests on evidence the prosecution itself described as “at the heart” of their case. Which multiple former FBI examiners have determined that this evidence was falsified and planted, a conclusion further confirmed by an independent expert retained by *Newsweek*.

³ <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11728709/NXIVM-sex-cult-leader-Keith-Ranieri-moved-violent-jail-dubbed-Guantanamo-North.html>

⁴ The so-called “attempted sex trafficking” count illustrates the point. Mr. Ranieri received 40 years for the allegation that a woman was told to get him to take a nude photograph of her. She never did. At sentencing, Judge Nicholas G. Garaufis himself ruled that a different woman who was told to — and did — have Mr. Ranieri take a nude photograph of her was not sex trafficked, even under a civil standard. The inconsistency speaks for itself.

In my vast experience handling BOP matters, the retaliation against Mr. Raniere is an unmistakable consequence of his efforts to expose the corrupt government conduct in his case. These actions, and the ongoing pattern of conduct, originated under prior BOP leadership.

In addition to retaliatory conduct against Mr. Raniere, the conditions at USP Tucson are deplorable.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss the aforementioned with you or a member of your team and share additional information so that, under your tenure, this wrong can be set right, and so that Mr. Raniere's right to legal counsel and communications is secured. Mr. Raniere also welcomes the opportunity for you or a member of your team to visit with him, with me, at USP Tucson, so that he can detail the extreme hardships that he and others at the facility have experienced to you.

Sincerely yours,
LAW OFFICES OF ALAN ELLIS

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Alan Ellis', with a large, stylized initial 'A' and a cursive 'E'.

By: ALAN ELLIS

cc: Clay Cook
Supervisory Attorney, FCI Phoenix

Deborah J. Blum
Lead Post-Conviction Attorney for Keith Raniere