



American Correctional Officer

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Congressman Cardoza Introduces the

“Jose Rivera Correctional Officer Protection Act”

Bill Provides Stab-Proof Vests for Every Federal Correctional Officer

WASHINGTON, DC — Yesterday afternoon Congressman Dennis Cardoza introduced HR 6462, the “Jose Rivera Correctional Officer Protection Act” to provide all federal correctional officers with stab-proof vests. The bill authorizes \$20 million for the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) to purchase the vests and mandates that officers wear them while on duty.

“The workplace safety of our federal corrections officers is of the upmost importance to me. Like our soldiers and our police officers, these individuals help to ensure the protection of the American public,” said Cardoza. “This bill is a necessary step towards helping prevent another tragedy like the one that occurred at USP Atwater on June 20th.”

On June 20, 2008, two inmates brutally attacked and killed Correctional Officer Jose Rivera at the Federal Penitentiary in Atwater, California. The two inmates who attacked Officer Rivera had been classified by the BOP as ‘unable to rehabilitate’, and were among the most dangerous in the prison population.

California state correctional officers and local city and county law enforcement officials are issued protective stab-proof vests while on duty, BOP correctional officers are only issued protective vests for use in responding to emergencies and when escorting inmates in the community, not during the routine, everyday performance of their responsibilities. Thus, BOP correctional officers are the only segment of the correctional workforce not afforded this additional safety precaution.

“I have written to the Bureau of Prisons in the past about the safety of our prisons. In addition to providing vests I believe we need to address overcrowding, staffing shortages, locality pay, and prison management techniques. I am considering further legislation to address these problems and in the coming days and weeks I will work with BOP to

ensure that safety is improved,” said Cardoza.

Congressman Cardoza is meeting with BOP Director Harley Lappin next week to discuss safety issues at federal prisons.

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