



For Immediate Release: July 22, 2008
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Statement in Support of the Friends & Family of Correctional Officers Organization

WASHINGTON, DC — “I’m honored to support the important work of the *Friends & Family of Correctional Officers* organization. This dedicated, unified group will be a strong voice for our correctional officers at USP Atwater – I look forward to partnering with them to find solutions to keep the prison and our correctional officers safe. As you well know, the federal prison system is at a significant crossroads. Staffing levels are *decreasing* while inmate populations are *increasing*. In Atwater, the Penitentiary is operating at 85% of necessary staffing levels to watch over a prisoner population 25% over capacity. Such levels leave correctional officers vulnerable, as shown by the recent tragedy involving Officer Rivera. While we continue to mourn the loss of Officer Rivera, I look forward to finding sensible solutions that will keep the men and women who protect us safe. The formation of *Friends & Family of Correctional Officers* is an important step forward in this direction.” – Congressman Dennis Cardoza

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