

OPEN LETTER

EXPANDED to add plea re: Nathan Goninan (aka, “Nonnie Lotusflower”) on 1/7/2025

Cheryl Strange, Secretary
Department of Corrections
Washington State

Sent via email

Dear Secretary Strange:

The Foundation Against Intolerance & Racism (FAIR), together with the undersigned on behalf of female inmates at Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW), urges the Department of Corrections (DOC) to prioritize the safety of female inmates over the feelings of males. Specifically, we request that you not preemptively grant Bryan “Amber” Kim’s recent requests—either to be returned to WCCW or released outright – and not to preemptively grant Nathan Goninan’s (aka, “Nonnie Lotusflower”) request to be released into the general population at WCCW.

Kim, a 36-year-old male inmate who was convicted of brutally murdering his parents, is currently housed at Monroe Correctional Facility. He claims he does not feel safe there. He alleges that housing him in a men’s prison constitutes cruel and unusual punishment. Although Kim’s Petition is before the Washington Court of Appeal, Division I, FAIR understands that the DOC may independently choose to return him to WCCW at any time.

Lotusflower, a 38-year-old male inmate who was convicted of murdering a 17-year-old girl, is currently housed at WCCW, reportedly in a specialized unit. He claims that he is improperly being held in solitary confinement, despite previous infractions for sexually assaulting a female inmate and the DOC’s assessment that he poses an “unmitigated threat to the safety of other incarcerated individuals” within WCCW.

We cannot emphasize strongly enough the grave consequences of housing Kim and Lotusflower with female inmates at WCCW. Over the past several months, FAIR has communicated with hundreds of incarcerated women, many of whom have filed formal reports describing severe harms resulting from forced co-housing with male inmates. Such reports include:

- A female inmate was sexually harassed and groped in her sleep by a male inmate.
- A disabled woman in a wheelchair was physically attacked by a 6’7” male inmate.
- A female inmate’s fibromyalgia symptoms have intensified due to stress from male co-habitation, necessitating new medicalization.

- Multiple women have been traumatized by voyeurism, sexual advances, and exposure to “consensual” sexual activities— violations of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), which deems all such scenarios rape.
- A female inmate’s PTSD and anxiety triggered by proximity to male offenders.

The DOC’s policy of placing male prisoners who self-identify as transgender in a women’s facility has led to ongoing discrimination, violating the Fourteenth and Eighth Amendments. Allowing Kim or Lotusflower to live among the female inmates at WCCW would unreasonably heighten the risk to female inmates who have already endured physical, sexual, and psychological harm.

Women’s prisons are not designed to manage the risks posed by male inmates, many of whom have histories of violent crime. Female inmates, disproportionately survivors of past male abuse, are now trapped in conditions that exacerbate their vulnerability and trauma. This situation is intolerable, discriminatory, and unlawful.

We urge the DOC, in the strongest possible terms, to reject Kim’s and Lotusflower’s requests. The safety and well-being of female inmates must not be sacrificed.

Sincerely,

Monica Harris, Executive Director, FAIR
Leigh Ann O’Neill, Director of Legal Advocacy, FAIR
[additional signatories]