

Governor Edward G. Rendell  
225 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Rendell,

I would like to bring to your attention a recently enacted pen-pal ban in Pennsylvania prisons, which states: "Inmates are also specifically prohibited from advertising for pen pals." This rule can be found in DC-ADM 003 Subsection A.3.k. and is in direct violation of the First Amendment.

I respectfully wish to inform the Governor's office that I am vehemently opposed to the rule. It not only violates the First Amendment rights of inmates in Pennsylvania, it is also an attempt to censor what I can and cannot view on my own computer. Furthermore, even legal profiles and résumés are being rejected by your state – two tools inmates rely upon to gain their release. Pennsylvania's DOC website already posts inmates' names, addresses, and photos, so there is no logical rationale for imposing this rule. It is arbitrary and cruel; in fact, one might legitimately wonder if the state of Pennsylvania wants to prolong the amount of time inmates spend incarcerated. Inmates should be encouraged to seek friends and jobs. The state should be encouraging correspondence, not discouraging it.

I hereby request that your office act swiftly and responsibly to intervene and abolish this unconstitutional DOC rule. I also request that this letter be entered into the official record in **opposition** of this rule. I will continue to monitor this situation through WriteAPrisoner.com. I appreciate that the DOC is committed to reducing crime and recidivism, and I encourage the state to work with sites such as WriteAPrisoner.com that seek to reduce recidivism – as does the state of Pennsylvania, I am sure. I look forward to your response regarding this urgent matter.

Respectfully,