

Cutter

January 19,

Mr. Steve Baskin, Warden
North Unit
Arizona State Prison
P.O. Box 629
Florence, AZ 85232

Dear Sirs:

I have enclosed several papers on AIDS as I said I would. In addition, I just received two new papers concerning AIDS in prisons. For the next month or two, I am concerned that there will be a lot of pressure in our industry by the news media and the regulatory people. We do not want to "rock the boat" as far as the Bureau of Prisons is concerned by exposing a new disease in a prison. We want to wait until the facts are well known before we take our position.

We first heard about AIDS early last summer. At the time we were not concerned because there was no reason we believed we would be affected. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) is estimating that the number of AIDS victims has grown by 100% every 6 months. It has almost done that. This summer there were about 500 cases. Currently there are over 100 just in the U.S. It appears that the disease is found in all cases. There is strong evidence to suggest that AIDS is passed on to other people through blood transfusions and plasma products. Specifically, the AIDS virus can be transmitted through breast milk and the disease can be found in breast milk. Current methods to test for AIDS product therefore we are very concerned about our donor pool and their judgments.

I hope this gives you enough background and information to explain to your trustees and legislators why we have not begun construction on the new center yet. We are hopeful that something will develop in the near future so we can test for AIDS just like we do for hepatitis B. This would solve all of our problems.

I will keep in touch and continue to send you any information which seems pertinent to your prison operation.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Berlin
Plains Prosecutor's Office

MIL 116245