

Wiley Rein Files Class Action Lawsuit Against Virginia Women's Prison Violating Inmates' Constitutional Rights

July 27, 2012

Earlier this week, the Legal Aid Justice Center of Charlottesville, VA , Wiley Rein LLP and the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs filed a class action lawsuit on behalf of women prisoners incarcerated in the Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women (FCCW). The lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Virginia against the Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC) and Armor Correctional Health Services Inc. for failing to provide constitutionally adequate medical care.

Wiley Rein's pro bono team is led by Insurance and Litigation partner Theodore A. Howard. Other Wiley Rein attorneys who actively participated in investigating the facts and preparing the case for filing include associates Rachel A. Alexander, Laura El-Sabaawi, Peter J. Jenkins, Cori Lombard, David E. Markert, Mary Catherine Martin, Christiane M. McKnight, Brandon J. Moss and Lori Scheetz. The Complaint alleges that medical care at FCCW is so deficient that it violates the Eighth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which protects prisoners from cruel and unusual punishment and requires adequate health care for prisoners.

The lawsuit describes health care conditions so lacking that the plaintiffs have suffered prolonged physical pain and the risk of premature death, including such examples as patients being forced to wait several months to see a doctor or nurse practitioner and being refused treatment for serious illnesses involving blood clots, unexplained catastrophic weight loss, Hepatitis C and staph infections. The lawsuit also targets Armor-a for-profit corporation-with which DOC contracts to provide health care at Fluvanna and several

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other prisons in Virginia. It points out that the terms of the DOC contract with Armor create financial incentives for the provision of cheaper and reduced levels of care. The lawsuit asks the court to enjoin DOC and Armor from failing to provide adequate medical care to the named plaintiffs and other women at FCCW and placing their health and lives at risk.

Mr. Howard counsels and represents domestic and international insurers and reinsurers in a broad range of coverage disputes and related litigation in state and federal courts. He also has considerable experience in other forms of complex civil litigation. Mr. Howard has been named one of "America's Leading Lawyers for Business" in Insurance by *Chambers USA*.