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# CIC BULLETIN

**NEWS FROM DC CORRECTIONS  
INFORMATION COUNCIL**



USP Beaumont (BOP photo), high security prison at FCC Beaumont, Texas

## Visit to USP Beaumont on October 6, 2017

On October 6, 2017, Corrections Information Council (CIC) Board Chair Charles Thornton, CIC Director Michelle Bonner, and Brian Ferguson, Director of Mayor's Office of Returning Citizen Affairs, visited USP Beaumont, where there are 49 incarcerated DC men. Fourteen men chose to speak with the DC visitors after the DC delegation's tour of the facility.

Acting Complex Warden and other leadership staff led a tour of USP Beaumont and the areas within it that were affected by Hurricane Harvey. However, the group was unable to view the kitchen, as it was off-limits due to storm damage and repairs being done. The facility has cleaned other areas that were flooded during the storm, including Education (including law library, leisure library, and classrooms), Psychology, Medical, and Recreation. Medical reported that the "pill line" (access to medications)

continued during the storm and that there were two medical evacuations from the medium facility. When asked, the facility did confirm one death of a man housed in USP Beaumont during the storm (on September 9), but stated that the death was unrelated to the storm.

The DC group also toured housing units, including then still closed BA unit, another general population unit, and two programming units. Unit BA is a ground floor, 130 bed-capacity general population unit that was evacuated during the storm and was still closed on October 6, 2017. The unit flooded due to sewage backup overflowing from toilets and drains. Facility staff stated that they thought the flooding was due to inmates' flushing sheets and clothing down toilets, but stated that they had not experienced flooding leading to evacuation of a general population unit due to this cause in the past. The facility was in the process of raising cell lockers off the floor and repairing floors underneath prior to re-opening the unit.

When the group visited Unit CA, men there pointed out a mop closet that had also flooded during the storm, with water entering the nearby cells. On Oct. 6, that area and other areas of the facility had been cleaned and free any standing water. Air conditioning went out during the storm, and staff reported that unit temperatures were as high as 80 degrees. While the repairs were being made at the time of this visit, Unit DA had not had air conditioning restored as of Oct. 6.

Meanwhile, those who were housed in Unit BA were moved to other units, including programming units Residential Drug Abuse Program (RDAP) and Challenge units. While people from Unit BA were in these other units, programming stopped and had not yet resumed by Oct. 6, 2017 in Challenge Unit. Programming had just resumed on Oct. 6 in RDAP unit (where there is one DC participant), after not having programming for two months and after reducing from 80 to 60 participants due to staffing shortage.

When the DC representatives met with men from DC, they further confirmed other complaints heard through loved ones during the

storm. (See prior FCC Beaumont Updates on CIC website.) By October 6, the biggest issues were the lack of programming and food. Regarding programming, Education and Recreation were anticipated to be fully operational again by Monday, October 9. The facility was also on lockdown status before the storm (inmate assault; lost radio communication), during the storm (lack of power/water, limited staff) and after the storm (security threat groups). This meant several weeks, from August to October, without educational programming, recreational programming, movement, and ability to work for many of the men in USP Beaumont. Men expressed concerns over inability to earn money, as well as inability to program to improve prospects before the US Parole Commission or in their requests to transfer to lower security facilities. Lack of hot meals was also a concern, since USP Beaumont did not have a kitchen, and food delivered from other parts of the Complex was cold by the time the food arrived at the USP and served to men in styrofoam containers for transport back to their units.

Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton wrote the Federal Bureau of Prisons, requesting the agency's evacuation protocols. The Bureau responded in a [letter dated October 11, 2017](#), that each of the 122 facilities has plans for evacuations in cases of natural disasters. Congresswoman Norton reports that she [will soon meet](#) with BOP's new director, Mark Inch, to discuss this and other issues affecting persons convicted under DC Code who are in BOP custody. Director Inch has also visited the Beaumont Complex, earlier in the week of DC delegation's visit, and was made aware of storm and post-storm issues, as well as repairs and cleanup that had been completed.

The CIC thanks the staff of FCC Beaumont who provided access and information about the Complex; and the CIC is grateful for the information and time shared by the DC incarcerated persons and others directly affected by Hurricane Harvey. If there is any other information one would like to report regarding FCC Beaumont, please convey this information to the CIC at 202-478-9211 or at [dc.cic@dc.gov](mailto:dc.cic@dc.gov).

To view past CIC Bulletins on FCC Beaumont post-Tropical Storm Harvey, visit our website, [cic.dc.gov](http://cic.dc.gov).

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## **CIC Testifies on Bill 22-0451, Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act of 2017**

On Thursday, October 26, 2017, the DC Council Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety held a public hearing on Bill 22-0451, the "Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act of 2017". CIC Director Michelle Bonner testified before the Committee on the lack of rehabilitation services for 18-22 year old incarcerated DC persons sentenced under the current Youth Rehabilitation Act (YRA) in the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and DC Department of Corrections (DOC). Director Bonner also shared CIC's observations of the numbers of 18-22 year old incarcerated persons with short YRA sentences in BOP custody, with ideas on keeping this discrete population in the District to receive rehabilitation services while incarcerated. Full testimony can be found on our website, [cic.dc.gov](http://cic.dc.gov).

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*\*November 1, 2017\* \*Corrections Information Council\**

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