



CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

Office of the Secretary

February 27, 2020

The Honorable John M. W. Moorlach
California State Capitol
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Senator Moorlach,

I thank you for your letter to Governor Newsom regarding the potential use of Fairview Developmental Center in Orange County for Californians who have been repatriated to Travis Air Force Base.

Our top priority is the health and safety of all Californians. The patients who would be moved to Fairview Developmental Center are Californians who got the virus through no fault of their own. They have been away from their families and loved ones for weeks – first quarantined on a boat and now are going through quarantine and daily health assessments. These Californians have our support – and we are working to get them into the type of environment they need for the duration of their isolation. It's both in the best interest of public health and it's the right thing to do.

As you know, before the state offered to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USHHS) Fairview Developmental Center, we engaged with our local partners to discuss that possibility. In particular, the California Department of Social Services Director Kim Johnson reached out to her counterpart at the Orange County Social Services Agency, California Department of Public Health Director and State Public Health Officer Dr. Sonia Angell reached out to the Orange County Health officer. Similarly to how CalOES had previously communicated with local government officials in jurisdictions where facilities were identified as potential quarantine sites, CalOES staff reached out to Orange County and City of Costa Mesa Emergency managers, Orange County Fire Chief, and Orange County Sheriff. Additionally, on Friday, February 21st my team held a conference call briefing for all local elected officials, which you participated in.

Additionally, I agree that communication is important, and that is why we not only proactively reached out to our local partners, but have been engaging other

community partners and releasing information in almost real-time to ensure that we are not only prepared, but ready to respond to this virus.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued an All Facilities Letter (AFL) on [January 23, 2020](#) to licensed health care facilities to provide information on COVID-19 including infection control guidance, criteria for evaluation of Patients Under Investigation (PUIs), and recommendations for reporting, specimen collection, and testing. Subsequently, CDPH issued AFLs on [January 27](#), [January 31](#), [February 10](#), and [February 19](#), to ensure all licensed health care facilities have the appropriate resources and protocols. Additionally, the California Emergency Medical Services Authority, issued interim guidance to local emergency services agencies on the status, screening, transport, and infection control including specific personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements for handling of patients with COVID-19. Finally, on February 7, 2020, CDPH issued guidance to [schools, school districts, universities and colleges](#); and on February 11, 2020 to [child care and preschool](#) facilities.

In terms of your questions, we have outlined our responses below.

1. *According to the Statewide Property Inventory, the State of California owns or leases 37,279 properties throughout the State. Of these properties, how many have at least 10 individual bedrooms with attached bathrooms?*

As you know, time is of the essence in response to infectious disease outbreaks. Our focus was on facilities that are under the jurisdiction of the Health and Human Services Agency.

2. *Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency, declared in court on February 23 that Fairview was the only one of these sites suitable for putting patients with this highly contagious disease. How many of the 37,279 properties on the Statewide Property Inventory had Dr. Ghaly evaluated?*

As noted above, to begin with we focused on facilities that are under the jurisdiction of the Health and Human Services Agency, which includes Fairview Developmental Center.

3. *After signing his February 23, 2020 declaration, what has Dr. Ghaly done to identify an alternative "suitable state-owned site" for the purpose described in paragraph 18 of his declaration?*

We have engaged with our colleagues at the Department of General Services to assess other facilities in the state's portfolio. This assessment is currently underway.

4. *Since February 1, 2020, what has any State official done to identify alternative "suitable state-owned sites" for the purpose described in paragraph 18 of Dr. Ghaly's declaration?*

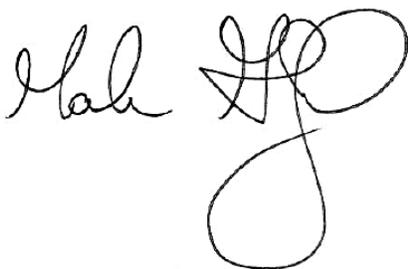
As part of our initial assessment, we focused on facilities under the jurisdiction of the Health and Human Services Agency. Over the last few days, we have engaged our state partners to look at other state facilities.

5. *Dr. Ghaly said, "There is no clinical indication that the health of the community in Costa Mesa would be jeopardized by housing COVID-19 patients at Fairview." However, this is a virus about which little is known and is more readily being associated with the word "pandemic," causing the recent plummet in the stock market. With all the factors being considered, what makes Fairview Developmental Center the most appropriate quarantine site?*

This has not reached the level of a pandemic, which is persistent and ongoing community transmission. Fairview Developmental Center enables us to not only ensure the health and safety of those repatriated individuals that would be housed there, but also the health and safety of the federal employees who would be providing the care and services, as well as the community more broadly.

I thank you for your questions and look forward to further engaging with you and all other elected officials and local partners as we continue to ensure the health and safety of all Californians and our visitors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Ghaly". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Mark Ghaly, MD, MPH
Secretary
Health and Human Services Agency