

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 8, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. Merrick B. Garland  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Mr. Michael Carvajal  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Prisons  
320 First St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20534

Mr. J.A. Keller  
Southeast Regional Director  
Federal Bureau of Prisons  
3800 Camp Crk. Prk. SW, Bldg. 2000  
Atlanta, GA 30331

Dear President Biden, Attorney General Garland, Director Carvajal, and Director Keller:

We write to request the expedited release of Mr. Leonard Peltier from the Coleman Federal Correctional Complex in Florida and request that Mr. Peltier be granted clemency. As part of the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Justice (DOJ) authorized the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) to release elderly inmates and those with underlying health conditions from federal prisons. Given the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in our country, as well as Mr. Peltier's underlying health conditions and age, we request immediate action be taken to release him from federal custody.

On June 26, 1975, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents Ronald Williams and Jack Coler were killed during a confrontation involving American Indian Movement (AIM) members on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation in South Dakota. Mr. Peltier was convicted of their murders in 1977 and sentenced to two consecutive life sentences. However, many evidentiary and procedural issues arose during the prosecution of Mr. Peltier's case, such as a critical alleged eyewitness to the shootings later retracting her testimony and admitting that the FBI had threatened her. Following a Freedom of Information Act ruling in 1980, Mr. Peltier's lawyers also discovered that the prosecution had withheld documented evidence that might have assisted Mr. Peltier's case.

Despite these revelations, Mr. Peltier has yet to receive a fair trial that is free from constitutional violations. Mr. Peltier is 77 years old and suffers from severe health conditions, including diabetes and an abdominal aortic aneurysm that can be lethal if ruptured. He has served more than 43 years in the federal prison system, some of which have been in solitary confinement. The support for Mr. Peltier's request for clemency is both widespread and strong. A petition for his release contained over 275,000 signatures and in 2021, former U.S. Attorney James H. Reynolds—whose office handled the criminal prosecution and subsequent appeal of Mr. Peltier—joined this movement by requesting Mr. Peltier's clemency to President Biden.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Attorney James Reynolds, "Clemency Request for Leonard Peltier to President Joseph R. Biden," July 9, 2021.



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Teresa Leger Fernández  
Member of Congress

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Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress

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Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress

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Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress

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Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress

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