

Warren, Markey, Keating Joint Statement on Attorney General Maura Healey's Investigation Into Bristol County Jail

United States Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Edward J. Markey (D-MA), along with Representative William Keating (D-MA-09) released a joint statement on Attorney General Maura Healey's investigation into the violent events of May 1, 2020 at the C. Carlos Carreiro Immigration Detention Center, Unit B, Bristol County Sheriff's office.

"The thorough investigation by the Office of Attorney General Healey compiled significant evidence that the Bristol County Sheriff's Office violated the civil rights of immigrants detained at the facility. We agree with the report's recommendation that the Bristol County Sheriff's Office should not be engaged in immigrant detention," said the lawmakers in a joint statement. "Every person – regardless of their immigration status and regardless of where they are living – deserves to feel safe, to have access to due process under the law, to be treated with dignity, and to have their rights protected. We led our colleagues in calling on the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General and the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties to conduct a federal investigation of these events. We look forward to the findings of that additional investigation, which we expect to help determine accountability for this disturbing incident and to offer further recommendations about how such events can be avoided in the future."

In May, shortly after the violent altercation, Senators Warren and Markey, along with Representatives Keating and Joseph P. Kennedy III (D-MA-04), wrote to Bristol County Sheriff Thomas

M. Hodgson to express alarm about the incident, to request that Sheriff Hodgson preserve video of the events to facilitate an investigation, and to allow persons detained at the facility to speak with their attorneys immediately. The four lawmakers also led the entire Massachusetts Congressional Delegation, as well as several members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus-Chairman Joaquin Castro (D-Texas) and Representatives Jesús G. “Chuy” García (D-Ill.), Juan Vargas (D-Calif.), Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), and Nydia M. Velázquez (D-N.Y.)-in requesting the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General and Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties investigate the violent incident.

On April 2, 2020, the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation wrote privately to the sheriffs overseeing each of the Massachusetts facilities, including Bristol County, that detain people on behalf of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The letter urged officials to implement alternatives to detention as much as possible, requested information about COVID-19 testing and their steps to comply with federal guidelines on management of COVID-19, and encouraged them to work to limit facility-to-facility transfers in order to protect the health and safety of detained people, facility personnel, and the general public during the pandemic.