

# “I am no one of importance”

The Bethlehem Gadfly coronavirus April 30, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts on the coronavirus* 

Gadfly has described himself as Maddow'd in respect to coronavirus in nursing homes and other senior-care facilities.

Rachel Maddow was like an early warning sensor beeping the need to more carefully scrutinize conditions in such places accounting for almost 50% of deaths by virus.

Maddow has transitioned a bit as more attention has been focused on these senior sites where “death is waiting to happen.”

See, for instance, this article in today's *Morning Call*: ***Peter Hall, “Auditor general calls for greater transparency, more testing for nursing home coronavirus cases.”***

She's transitioned to focus on jails and food-processing plants.

Death is also waiting to happen in food-processing plants.

See this brutal article in the Wednesday *Philadelphia Inquirer* provided to Gadfly by Councilwoman Olga Negron: ***DEADLY RIDE: Pa. poultry workers traveling to their plant in a crowded van were stricken by the virus.***

Eight people crammed in a van riding 30 miles to and from work in a plant where people work close together — one passenger dead, the rest sick, all fearful of losing their jobs.

Brutal.

“I am no one of importance,” one says, in regard to what is being done for worker safety.

Heart-wrenching.

Councilwoman Negron is involved through her “day job” because these workers are Latino.

In fact, 35% of the workers in the food-processing industry nation-wide are Latino.

Essential workers.

Councilwoman Negron through her “day job” is in direct contact with the family that lost their dad (Arismendi Bera), and every day she fields phone calls from two or three Latino workers from that plant. Even though the plant is not in Bethlehem, COVID-19 positive workers are sharing her firm’s number, seeking a place to vent their fears to someone in their own language. They need someone to talk to.

It’s easy to say that except for the soul-wearying work performed by day-jobber Negron that this is not a story about Bethlehem.

But we know from her **April 8 post** that she has been busy fielding calls from local Hispanic/Latinos as well.

Bethlehem is 30% Hispanic/Latino, yet this community accounts for **44% of the cases** tested positive for the virus.

Which leads Gadfly — who, of course, knows nothing of such Urban Administration matters — to wonder whether a city with such a substantial block should not have some formal liaison *within* city government.

The Mayor does have a **Latino Advisory Committee**.

Why is such liaison left to the Negrons and the non-profits like the **Hispanic Center**?

But maybe it is best so.

Gadfly just wonders.

“I am no one of importance,” haunts him.