

## Prison Board Testimony August 15, 2016

Note: **Bold and Italics**= updated issues from 1/14/16.

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1. **Short Staff.** *UPDATE: New staff is currently in training at WSCC.*
  - a. Religious services and Spanish AA were canceled 4 Sunday evenings in a row at WSCC this fall due to a shortage of staff.
  - b. This was **NOT** the fault of the Wardens. They are excellent administrators.
  - c. Possible root cause: The training academy, especially in the south, is “raided” when recent graduates are offered \$15,000 more a year to work at local jails, leaving the NV DOC short staffed, and out the staff, train officers for whom the training funds were allocated.
  - d. This issue needs to be researched and addressed appropriately.
2. **Recidivism.** *UPDATE: Do not release unless re-entry training completed.*
  - a. Please consider a study to see if the Federal prisoner reentry initiative (42 U.S. Code § 17541) would be applicable, in whole or part, to ameliorate some of the funding issues in the NV DOC.
  - b. This could receive bi-partisan support, given the potential life/cost savings.
  - c. Use these cost savings to re-install the pre-release programs cut from the budget in 2008 in order to reduce recidivism. Fact: 95% of persons currently incarcerated will be released. The best way to stay out of prison is to have a good paying job.
3. **Vision and Mission** statements of the NV DOC need to be reviewed to include, at a minimum, a reduction in recidivism. I would be privileged to serve on a review panel tasked with this issue. *UPDATE: Done?*
4. **Judges.** Remove mandatory sentencing requirements to allow Judges to do what they are paid to do, Judge. Reduce the rate of incarceration with alternative sentencing, especially for first time offenders. *UPDATE: Washoe County has a model for this activity. It takes more work/resources on the front end. Success is possible.*
5. **Pain Killers.** Identify the number of offenders whose path to prison was started with prescribed painkillers, work on solutions to this problem. *UPDATE: Sincerely appreciate all Gov. Sandoval has done on this issue.*
6. **Incarceration Alternatives.** Find alternatives to prison for the mentally ill, currently almost 25% of the prison population and implement a plan to help them be successful. *UPDATE: Is there a plan in place?*
7. **Aged Prisoners.** Have a plan in place to identify and release aged and infirm prisoners no longer deemed a threat to society. Model and evaluate current plans by the Federal Government and other states. *Status?*
8. **Classes.** Consider offering classes in money management, like the FDIC’s Money Smart curriculum, A Financial Education Program, especially for the soon to be released. Re-fund the pre-release assistance programs cut prior to 2008. *UPDATE: Issue for the next legislature? Proposals prepared? Computer classes are NEEDED by both the academic AND crafts training programs. Vocational training is needed to insure skilled workers are available, including welding, woodshop, HVAC, and green technology.*
9. **Integration.** Fully integrate Nevada Job Connect with local prisons. Ex-offender placement is at 90% here in Carson City. *UPDATE: TBD.*

**10. Parole Board Preparation.** Please consider the dissemination of the vetted and attached parole guidance within the NV DOC. I will personally fund paper copy reproduction costs up to a limit of \$1,000, and provide life skills training here in Carson City to identify Life Goals and Objectives so that inmates can be better prepared for their parole hearing, and more importantly, clear about the foci of their lives post incarceration. **UPDATE: Some prospective parolees have done extensive Parole Board Preparation. This is excellent practice for job interviews. The entire way parole is handled in the State needs to be reviewed, including accountability and oversight, a study of how it is done in other states, and what are the most successful strategies needs to be made.**

NEW ISSUES:

- A. Review the status of the inquiries made at this meeting. DONE.
- B. Research and identify the following issues for your consideration:
  1. Mentoring in the NV DOC. **Is there a DOC program? Model to follow?**
  2. Status of Driver's licenses for the recently released. **UPDATE: Soon to be released get a voucher for DMV. Real progress. Appreciated.**
  3. Half-way house issues Pre-parole- if you have \$ you can leave. . . **UPDATE: No change. Sad.**
  4. ID what jobs ex-felons can take- its complex, perhaps a law school student white paper. **UPDATE: Action required, and needed.**
  5. **Medical Issue: Ulcerative Colitis- UPDATE: possible very low cost highly effective treatment. Needs legal and Administrative bases. Much suffering and costs could be significantly reduced.**
  6. Qualifications for Director of the *NV DOC*. **UPDATE: Exceeded expectations.**
  7. **Proposed Grant for Study of Integration of: Holland (currently in place at WSCC) / Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Johnson-O'Connor Foundation aptitude testing into pre-release and post release programs. UPDATE: could be valuable/value added in relation to re-entry information, and classification.**
  8. Toastmasters in Prison **UPDATE: Need sponsor, and model.**
  9. Warden Evaluation Criteria- staff/population safety, recidivism, educational program participation/results, GED, etc., release preparation, lawsuits. **UPDATE: Possible use in performance appraisal.**
  10. Identity theft prevention measures in place in the NV DOC? Awareness measures? Recent examples. **UPDATE: Provide inmate information.**
  11. Annual Credit Reports- study necessary, action most likely required. **UPDATE: Informal/anecdotal data gathering is currently under way. Some promising results, some not.**