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Governor

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Director

FRANCISCO V. AGUILAR
Secretary of State

AARON D. FORD
Attorney General

**STATE OF NEVADA
BOARD OF STATE PRISON COMMISSIONERS**

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

The Board of State Prison Commissioners held a public meeting on Wednesday, August 30, 2023, beginning at 10:01 a.m., and was conducted at the following locations. The meeting could also be viewed and heard via YouTube.

Meeting Location:

Grant Sawyer Building
555 E. Washington Avenue
Suite 5100
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Video Conference Location:

Old Assembly Chambers
State Capitol Building
101 N. Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

1. Call to Order/Roll Call of Board Members/Confirm Quorum

Board Members Present:

Governor Joe Lombardo – in Las Vegas, NV
Attorney General Aaron D. Ford – in Las Vegas, NV

Board Members Absent:

Secretary of State Francisco V. Aguilar

Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC) Attendees:

James E. Dzurenda, Director
William Quenga, Deputy Director of Prison Industries
Kristina Shea, Deputy Director of Support Services
Dr. Kenneth Williams, Medical Director
James Jones, Inspector General
Danyeale Madsen, Executive Assistant, Meeting Clerk
Michael Williams, Re-Entry Administrator

- 2. Public Comment (1st Period):** First of two sessions to address the Board of Prison Commissioners regarding items indicated on the agenda (3 minute maximum per speaker). Public comment is transcribed as spoken with minimal edits such as deleting a repeated word. Note: public comments were also accepted in written form via email until 9 p.m. the day before the meeting as indicated on the publicly posted agenda.

Carson City:

- My name is **Nicole Williams W-I-L-L-I-A-M-S** and I have a loved one incarcerated in the Nevada Department of Corrections. I'm also an activist and board member of Return Strong. I'm reading a statement that was worked on by a team of people who have loved ones incarcerated here but they live outside of Nevada and are not allowed to call in to give comments. So I'm here to represent our families and Return Strong members inside Nevada prisons. Our concerns today center around the

inappropriate or total lack of medical care that incarcerated persons receive while in the care and custody of NDOC. Return Strong conducted a medical survey with over 100 respondents from 2021 to 2023. From the results of the survey, we have selected three major points of concern. 1) Prescription medications. Providers must prescribe appropriate medications and dosages based on the needs of their patients. We find this is often not the case. Medications for chronic conditions are often not provided even if they come into prison with that medication. The NDOC medical staff or doctor will change prescriptions given by hospital doctors or other outside specialists or, they simply do not allow them at all. During the 2023 legislative session the issue was addressed through AB 121 yet is still causing issues around the timely refill of prescriptions. The legislation was intended to end the kite process and ensure the medical providers were ensuring the prescriptions were refilled without causing gaps without treatment. Facilities are still not requiring kites to get refills leaving people without life-sustaining medications. 2) Length of time to see a doctor. Medical kites are often ignored. Individuals must see a doctor to get refills of needed medication. It takes anywhere from six months to two years to get a doctor appointment. Meanwhile, people are going without their medication for chronic conditions. Some who submitted kites for an emergency visit were told their condition was not an emergency. This includes one who had an abscessed tooth. Another individual had a heart condition and had to be hospitalized three times because he never got to see a doctor. While a recently passed SB 416 eliminates medical co-pays and alleviates the financial burden of receiving medical treatment, it seems that the ability to actually get seen by a doctor remains a huge barrier to anyone receiving timely and proper medical care. 3) NDOC does not follow treatment plans prescribed by outside specialists. At least 14 survey respondents indicated that a provider outside of NDOC refused to treat them due to their incarceration. Outside doctors are terminating their contracts with NDOC due to NDOC's repeat failures to follow medical orders. It is our most sincere request that the new Medical Director will consider these concerns as well as many others revealed by the Return Strong survey. As stated in the survey report, implementing health promoting procedures and processes that focus on the most cost and life-saving method in the long run, prevention, would benefit both NDOC and the individuals in their custody. Given the long-term effect that medical neglect has on our loved ones and the expense it puts on taxpayers, preventative care would be much more cost effective than the high cost of extreme sick care. While we understand the difficulties due to the staff [three minutes reached] Thank you.

- Hi, my name is **Elizabeth Gutierrez G-U-T-I-E-R-R-E-Z**. I'm here today to advocate for those whose voices are not heard beyond the prison walls. Within NDOC, as we all know, there are many issues. One of which is very close to home for me, the food that our loved ones are served or therefore the lack of. My husband has been incarcerated for the past two years. Within that time the food has significantly decreased in quality and quantity. Some days they are given rotten fruit, spoiled milk, or condiments on their trays as a substitute to their main course. My husband was recently transferred to a conservation camp. He called me on several occasions telling me that the food was so bad that they couldn't even eat it or it was making several offenders sick. The milk was spoiled to the point that it was curdled. Even after trying several cartons, they were all the same. When they spoke to the COs they just stated that they should be fine because they just had barely gotten the shipment. At one point my husband called me extremely upset. For breakfast they had gotten tater tots, a side of ketchup, and tartar sauce. That's it. Grown men were served this. Men that were getting ready to head out for a full day's work. And not easy work, labor-intensive work. A child wouldn't even get full off of a tray like this. And even being in a conservation camp, where the calorie count is supposed to be higher since they do such labor-intensive work, is not even feeding them an adequate amount of food. I asked my husband what they were supposed to be served based on the menu they have posted on the wall. He laughed and stated they rarely serve or even have items available to make what's on the menu. Who controls this and follows through with these things so that what's on the menu is actually what is served? Why make a menu if it's only full of hopes and dreams for the

offenders reading it? I work two jobs to be able to support our family and to also be able to put money on my husband's books so he can buy commissary to make up for the lack of food he isn't getting from NDOC. It's a terrible feeling to hear that the person you love is hungry. That they wake up hungry. They go to work hungry. They go to sleep hungry. Or that they had to eat rotten or spoiled food because it was all that was available. Some offenders are fortunate enough to have extra money to purchase commissary to make up for the lack of food. But there are so many offenders at NDOC that don't have anyone to help them. Lack of food affects your mental state, your mood, your energy levels, and overall, your well-being. Where do we draw the line? I thought being in prison meant that you lose your freedom. Not that you lose your humanity and your dignity. Thank you.

- Good morning Board. My name is **Karen Gedney G-E-D-N-E-Y**. I was the senior physician for the Department of Corrections from 1987 to 2016 and my comments will be related to the diet on the agenda that you have. I had a unique, let's say experience, to watch the impact of food diet on the medical conditions of the inmate population because I had to actually take care of those conditions. And what I want to bring up is basically a story about how it can improve and I saw different approaches over the years. One of the greatest approaches was the culinary arts program at Northern Nevada Correctional Center where a Warden who was progressive saw that food was a major issue in a prison. Also, that many inmates in no way wanted to work in the culinary because well, it was a sort of miserable job. And what this Warden realized was if we have a culinary arts program where they're invested in getting a sous chef type of certification license, and I hire the right employee to run the culinary, then we can really improve the food situation. Because I realize that working in a system you only have so much money, so much talent, and it makes sense if you make the most of it. And that's what I just wanted to bring to your attention. Thank you.

Las Vegas:

- Hello, my name is **Pamela Browning B-R-O-W-N-I-N-G**. I am with Return Strong and I'm here today to talk about hunger. On a daily basis our loved ones at NDOC facilities are experiencing hunger. The amount of food given in the chow hall is not even enough for a child let alone a full-grown adult. Yes, they have access to store but often they are limited to how much they can spend and on top of that usually receive less than half of what they ordered. Don't get me started on how much everything costs. A lot of incarcerated population doesn't have anyone on the outside to help them with packages or store so they are left feeling hungry. How does one supplement what they are not getting from the chow hall? One of our incarcerated members at Ely State Prison says, "I have eaten toothpaste and Tums antacids or even salt for hunger pains. It helps for a little bit." Another says, "I ate toilet paper and drank hot water." Please tell me how this is humane. I have heard the term hangry. Have you heard the term hangry? Hangry is what happens when you haven't eaten. You get cranky and irritable when you haven't eaten right. Imagine having the luxury - of not having the luxury of grabbing the Snickers or anything else really. How do you expect to feed people minimal amounts of food that really isn't fit for human consumption? I have heard many times how the food was rotten and moldy or there was fat PC [as heard]. An incarcerating member tells us, "I've gotten sick from eating meat that was either undercooked or bad." Medical assistance is hard to get at HDSP unless you're extremely sick or near death. Often our loved ones are left with the decision to eat something bad and get sick or don't eat at all and get sick. Nobody should have to go hungry. The fact is that if our approach to tough on crime is focused on putting people in prison, then using prison to heal physically, mentally, emotionally should be a part of our tough on crime approach. Be tough on the change that needs to happen to create the world that no longer needs prison. And in the meantime, please feed our loved ones. Thank you.
- Hi, my name is **Crystal Voight** last name **V-O-I-G-H-T**. I'm a member of Return Strong and I have a loved one that's incarcerated at High Desert State Prison. I am part of a work group that's working on

identifying issues around food insecurity in prisons and specifically here in Nevada and trying to understand those issues from both an analysis side and by studying research around the issues of food insecurity and from a humanitarian perspective in order to get a better understanding of the experience of incarcerated people. So according to studies, people incarcerated at various facilities are not receiving enough food to satisfy their hunger. The food served on the trays often deviates from the menu with missing items being substituted with items such as syrup packets. In some facilities the bread is moldy rotten, the potatoes are uncooked and raw, and sometimes not edible. Additionally, there are no fresh fruits or there are no fresh vegetables, only black and rotten ones. Fresh fruits are either not ripe or overripe. To alleviate their hunger, some inmates have resorted to eating non-item foods such as toothpaste tacos which involves wrapping toothpaste inside of toilet paper. Others consume Tums, diet pills, or salt packets. Or some save their meals throughout the day so they can eat. Many people report constantly thinking about food and how they can obtain it. This obsession has affected their mental health causing aggression, mood swings, and other issues. The lack of adequate food has also caused foodborne illnesses such as vomiting, diarrhea, sweating, and dizziness. While some others have received medical attention for Salmonella poisoning, most have not as it takes too long to seek medical treatment. People who have been incarcerated for 15 to 40 years have noticed a decline in the quality and quantity of food. The meals are served by guards, porters, inmates, and caseworkers. But at High Desert State Prison there are issues with the general population serving food to the protective custody units which has resulted in food being tampered with, food poisoning, and some have reported filing grievances; however, majority of them don't in fear of they're going to be retaliated against. There are three main issues happening here surrounding foods. First, chronic hunger among inmates. Second, low-grade food not fit for human consumption. Deviation from the approved posted menus with low substitute qualities or low substitute qualities. It is our understanding there are some proposals being brought to the table today to address these issues, but our concern is those solutions while they might provide a temporary solution or Band-Aid, ultimately it's a Band-Aid on a gaping wound. The pressure point becomes not only what can we do now to limit the bleeding while we work towards long-term solutions, but how do we actually provide a nutritional long-term value plan? Thank you.

- Good morning, my name is **Yolanda Silva S-I-L-V-A** and I'm a volunteer with Return Strong. It's well known and documented that hunger is directly linked to mental health, anger, and aggression. Think about the last time you were really hungry, or better yet, think about the last time your spouse or loved one was very hungry to the point they were hangry. You know that point of hunger where you're so hungry that you become angry? This is the [inaudible] these are a few of the hundreds of stories from High Desert State Prison that echo the same thing throughout NDOC facilities. First, "Hunger determines how I sleep and makes a huge part of me being active physically. If I get food, I work out and do activities and draw. If I'm hungry, I can't sleep, and I don't want to work out because it'll get worse. Of course, it's a mental health thing and over the smallest food dispute there could be major issues. Have you seen fights over less than three dollars in food? It's normal in prison. It's not about an inmate violent outburst. We're all hungry, pissed off, and can't do anything to improve our situation." Two, "Hunger causes me to lose sleep many nights. Causes me to stress out, causing my mental health to decrease. Also being hungry causes me to lash out and become angered with loved ones. Having no food makes me lose focus and have a lack of physical energy." Three, "It's hard to sleep when your stomach is rumbling. I fixate on food, especially watching others get store and I'm hungry. Aggressiveness comes into play trying to get others to share their food or give me extra state food. If you don't have food, you don't want to work out and burn those calories because you have no way of replacing them so you stay stagnant to not be so hungry later." Four, "My hunger has a negative impact on every aspect of my life. Most people here seem to exist primarily to survive between meals. Moods and mental health are bad. Activity level is low. Begging for food is pervasive. People generally behave like feral animals. Many inmates barter sex for food." Five, "Lack of food,

lack of any decent food, has a seriously negative effect on much of the population here. Obsessive hoarding and constant focus on meals dominate the conversations. People will beg for any scraps and debase themselves doing so. The idea that when people are treated like animals, they act like animals is very real.” Incarcerated individuals are not being fed proper nutrition and are slowly being starved. This has lifelong effects on individuals. It's up to us to make a change. These are human beings and should be treated as such. Thank you.

- Good morning, my name is **Chris Kovello K-O-V-E-L-L-O**. I'm an advocate with Return Strong. I'm also an instructor at Hope for Prisoners for the recently released for those at Casa Grande. My son was incarcerated in NDOC. A year ago, I stood here and gave most of the same public comment. A year later we are here with the new Governor, a new Director, and the same problems. I understand change takes time but we're running out of time. The Pulitzer prize-winning novel by John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, a family travels to California during Great Depression to look for work and the family obtains a job picking peaches. The mother goes to company store to buy food for their dinner which is owned and operated by the farming operation. She finds that the prices are overpriced but there are no other options if they want to eat. There are no other shops and she's forced to use their meager wages to purchase food from the company store at inflated prices. John Steinbeck wrote this novel in 1939, 83 years ago. Today in 2023, I stand in front of you as a real life mother who is unlimited out of my heart for my family and just wants to see that their needs are met. Much like the mother in *The Grapes of Wrath*, I have limited income and only one place to shop, the offender store also known as the commissary. I was sickened to learn that a recent audit of NDOC 's fiscal processes outlined that over the course of the year commissary prices netted the department over 5 million in profit. This is profit off the backs of our already struggling Nevada families. I'm helping care for my grandchildren who are now part of the statistic of children in the U.S with incarcerated parents. Children with one parent incarcerated are more likely to have long-term physical and mental health concerns, lower lifetime earnings, an unstable living conditions. Your increase in prices and the commissions that NDOC are receiving not only affect me but also my grandchildren. No secret that the meals in the NDOC system are historically loaded- low in nutritional value and in portion sizes. During lockdowns or period of inadequate staffing meals are sometimes not even served. Food purchased from the commissaries often the only supplemental nutrition incarcerated individuals have access to. Have you ever received a letter from one of your children describing hunger pains and what it's like to go to bed hungry? Imagine deciding to choose between supplementing nutrition and basic needs for your son or buying diapers and nutritional food for your grandchildren at home. I do this all the time. Not only are families bearing the financial and emotional burdens buying food fir their loved ones but also basic necessities the NDOC has deemed as a luxury. Inmates are given one roll toilet paper per week. Is using more than one roll toilet paper really a luxury? Aren't shower sandals a necessity for health reasons? Basic necessities are not luxuries they're part of the eighth amendment that requires prison officials to [three minutes reached] evolve uh adhere to [inaudible] and standards. Thank you very much I would like to finish on the second period. Thank you.
- Hi, my name is **Mariana Espinoza E-S-P-I-N-O-Z-A**. I'm a volunteer at Return Strong. I have a husband and a son incarcerated at High Desert State Prison. I have a younger son who was recently released from Wells Conservation Camp and I am here today to bring to light a few issues that have me concerned for my loved ones. First, I would like to talk about the food portions and quality of being served. My youngest son was in the kitchen. He went while he was working in the kitchen, he came across the boxes the food comes in. They were marked “not for human consumption.” I feel that's wrong. If we're going to be having our people incarcerated, you need to feed them food that is for human consumption. They're not animals. Like somebody said, you treat you like animals they're going to act like animals. I'm sorry. Okay, when he asked why they were serving the food he was told

to not pay attention to that. Our loved ones are human beings and deserve to be fed human food. Then there's the portions that they are given that is not sufficient for a grown man. My seven-year-old received more food at school than she does- than my loved ones get incarcerated. My loved ones are constantly quite hungry because I am unable to put money on their accounts for them to order commissary food. My loved ones used to take multivitamins when they were out here to get the vitamins and nutrients they needed. Since they've been incarcerated, they're unable to get that nutrients and their vitamins necessary. My youngest son that was released in July recently ended up in the emergency room. The doctors told him that the swelling to his legs and his feet were due to the poor diet he had the six years he was incarcerated. He's out having normal proportions but it's hurting his health and actually that's really wrong. I can't afford to send money to my loved ones for them to have accurate food portions. You know, I understand they're incarcerated but just because they're incarcerated doesn't mean that they're dehumanized. That they're treated like animals. That hurts me to my sore. So, I'm a single parent. I take care of my elderly mother. So, I cannot afford things for them to eat. So I feel that the state needs to do something about their food quality and the portions they've served. The food problems are causing serious health conditions not only for my loved ones but our other inmates incarcerated. This is not only a problem for us but also NDOC because of the medical conditions caused by lack of nutrition will increase medical costs for NDOC. Thank you.

- Good morning, everybody. My name is **Jeanette Sivon-Sore S-I-V-O-N – F-O-R-E**. I'm a psychiatric nurse here in southern Nevada. And I have come to speak on behalf of my loved ones and others incarcerated. So, I would like the Department of Corrections to recall their mission statement and it is the mission of the Nevada Department of Corrections to protect society by maintaining offenders in a safe and humane conditions while preparing for them for successful re-entry back into society. We operate as one team proud of our reputation as leaders in corrections. Our staff will utilize innovative programming that will focus on education, mental health, substance abuse treatment, and vocational training as a cornerstone to offenders rehabilitation. What was left out there was medical. The mission of the medical division of the Nevada Department of Corrections states that they are committed to providing quality evidence-based health care using an efficient system of managed care that is professional, humane, and appropriate, and is supportive of the overall mission of the Nevada Department of Corrections. Uh, and my experience with just my loved one is over the last few years, now mind you we did have a pandemic, is that he started having issues with his dental. We are now like six years into it. He just received one partial fitting that fit and the bottoms did not work. The first time they came broken. So this is now six or seven years trying to get [inaudible] medical [inaudible] call this fracture in 2020. It was recommended that he'd go out and see a surgeon. He was sent back to the prison to heal. So that has caused neurological damage in his wrist. Now, I know of other offenders that also don't get adequate medical care timely and they have to send kites to get any kind of medications that a doctor orders. When they come in it takes two to three months to get medications. And then they want to send multiple kites before they actually get them as KOPs. That also affects us as a state when they are released because all these medical problems will have to be cared for later by our State. And in my job I also get to deal with people's mental health when they come out um and some of these are very compounding issues. My husband has been incarcerated for almost 30 years and we've seen a decline. And I understand as a state employee resources our biggest slack. We want to provide these things but if we are not looking for ways to fund and find resources to care for our population, this is still a vulnerable population. They still deserve [three minutes reached] Thank you.
- Good morning, my name is **Patricia Adkisson A-D-K-I-S-S-O-N**. My comments relate to today's regulations. This Board's failure to comply with the public rulemaking process after notice of defect now constitutes a defect of malfeasance. All regulations must be adopted in conformance with NRS 233b. This fact is emphasized in the State Administrative Manual and is a fundamental principle of the

separations of powers thoughts. Before the Director may have fixed any effective date to any regulation that works to bind any person outside of the department, this Board must conduct public workshops and provide responsive replies to public objections. Then the regulations must be submitted to the legislative council in order to ensure the regulations conform to the legislative intent before any effective date may be applied. This Board never completes its intended public function. Instead, the Director effectively hijacks the regulations and unilaterally affixes an effective date. This problem seems to be tied to the fact that this Board does not have a staff and instead, permits the department to act as judge, jury, and executioner without supervision. And as such, amounts to a rogue agency conducting quasi legislative activities in violation of Nevada article 3 and article 5. The effects have been catastrophic to my family. Where registered voters are confined to a State prison without any criminal conviction, through a bad classification practice by the department. The Secretary of State determined in March that my husband, Michael Adkisson, is currently confined to a State prison without any criminal conviction, recognizing my husband as a legal elector and registered voter. This lawful determination by the Secretary of State was made based upon the official State conviction record with potential repositories where the department does not even know the difference between a Judgment of Conviction and a conviction record. The department's enabling statute NRS 209.351 mandates reliance on the offender's conviction record, however the department's regulation fails to identify this requirement. The Board and the department continue to act in defiance of the law. For this reason, our efforts will now be focused on litigation. For the record, I object to the Board's ongoing failure to adopt regulations without first conforming to the public rulemaking process. Finally, in recognition of the legislature's efforts, we encourage this Board to prioritize the lawful establishment of regulations in order to ensure the Office of the Ombudsperson for offenders will be fully operational by January 2024 as contemplated by Assembly Bill 452. Also, if you can, the draft minutes are supposed to be available to us 30 days after these meetings and that's not being done. So that's per chapter 241, I believe. Thank you.

- My name is **Ashley Gaddis G-A-D-D-I-S** and I was formerly incarcerated in Florence McClure Women's Correctional. Today I'd like to share my experience and concerns that have been ongoing and consistent around temperatures within the institution. Florence McClure was established in 1997 as one building. Since then, there has been additional units and buildings added. The additional units and buildings are 7, 8, 9, and 10. 7, 8, and 10 were added to the original building and unit 9 is a separate building. Although the prison as a whole is affected by the inadequacy of cooling and heat, these particular units have, and continue to be, the most affected and problematic. In 2013, I was in unit 9 which is like a brick warehouse type of building. The air conditioner went out. Complaints and grievances were submitted. Maintenance was ignored. The response that everyone received was that there they were waiting on parts. The problem remained this way throughout the entire summer. In addition to the lack of air, this is a program unit where you are expected to be fully clothed wearing long pants 8am to 5pm. No accommodations were given. The extreme heat conditions and lack of ventilation cause complications to several others' existing health problems which also were ignored. In 2019, I was in unit 7 where you are restricted to your cell approximately 20 hours a day. It was a summer as well. I remember seeing the heat wave warnings on the news. The air went out. This experience was unbearable and one of my worst experiences while being incarcerated. I filed an emergency grievance and I remember comparing myself to a dog left in a vehicle in 110 degree heat with the window cracked, because that would describe the amount of airflow that would come from the space underneath the door. Fortunately, the difference in this scenario is that I had access to water. I would wet my clothes throughout the day and try to stay cool. I would wear less clothing and would get yelled at by the COs who would check the rooms. The response during this time, six years later, was also waiting on parts. I'm here to tell you that this issue wasn't just 2013 and 2019. It is every summer that the cooling system goes out and every winter the heat goes out. I also find it rather odd that the medical and infirmary which are in the same wing as 7, 8, and 10, stays at a

constant cool. So, to be clear here today, I'm not saying that prison should be comfortable, but what I am suggesting is that NDOC be safe and humane. Thank you.

- Good morning, my name is **Sonia Williams**. My loved one was a member of Return Strong prior to his death at High Desert in 2021. I am now part of the core leadership team and an activist. And part of almost everything that Return Strong does from compassionate releases to legislative change, sorry visitation and policy change, I'm also a founding member of the new initiative Reunite Strong which is named after my daughter, to the murder of Christian Walker. You name it, I am there for it. As I looked at the agenda today and reflected on all the work that I voluntarily do to ensure that we are educated and on top of what is happening, I don't have a lot to say. I just have questions. Questions I would love to be answered but I know it isn't likely going to happen. Regarding failing facility inspections, Capital Improvement Projects that have been on approved lists but never funded, and the dis-repair at facilities that include the complete Department of Health failure of the kitchen at Southern Desert, I found some of these projects approved since 2007 and never addressed. Southern Desert has been known to not have hot water in the kitchen for years. How disgusting is that? Now it's even worse. Where is the money going? Why are none of these projects being taken seriously? What are the priorities that each facility? With the list of health code violations, why is Southern Desert still open? Or Ely? Or High Desert? What are the delays for Capital Improvement Projects? Facility condition reports are done but nothing was improved. We see the cycle: kitchen, sewage, no AC every summer and maintenance is limited and running in circles trying to fix outdated, broken everything. Cell doors don't work, fencing doesn't work, cameras are missing all over the place causing safety issues for incarcerated people and staff. If you don't care about our members and the people inside the prison what about your staff? Where are the RFPs for all the things that are not passing codes? Why are people's food still filled with rodent droppings? Think about that. A year ago, Return Strong met with Daniels and some of the people that are here today to discuss all of that and we were told that part of the problem is that the facilities in Nevada were not built correctly or not built for the climate change is occurring. Spot tours won't cut it. If we are using prisons, we have to maintain them to at least to the point that we are not violating the Eighth Amendment conditions of confinement. Thank you.
- Good morning, my name is **Caitlin Ahern A-H-E-R-N** and I am a member of Return Strong. Over the summer, I remember the extreme heat wave that affected Las Vegas. And during that time, my two-year-old daughter and I would do our best to not leave the air-conditioned house. We were so thankful for that protection and luxury. Unfortunately, my incarcerated loved one spent many days in a unit without proper AC and did not have access to ice or extra water to stay cool. The first few days we tried to make the best of it, make jokes about the desert while hoping and praying that it would get fixed quickly. After a day or two, I could hear the difference in his attitude and his ability to hold a conversation. He was trying so hard to show up on the phone for me and our family but just couldn't stand to exert extra effort with the extreme heat, all while continuing to work, and the lack of relief from it all. He would tell me he was struggling to sleep in the heat and even at night, it never felt like it cooled down. The Medical Director is scheduled to speak today about inspections and facilities failing those inspections. But one of the things I want to bring to your attention is the horrible state of these facilities and lack of maintenance. Director Dzurenda spoke about it during the legislative session, and I understand that money is limited, but the heating and air conditioning in these buildings is horrendous. We live in a climate without global warming that's hot and it keeps getting hotter. Please consider the health and safety of these men and women as you make decisions on where to update facilities. And don't forget the silenced voices of incarcerated loved ones. Thank you for your time.

- Hello. My name is **Jodi Hocking J-O-D-I - H-O-C-K-I-N-G**. I'm gonna attempt to keep it brief today because I think, like this to me is a really beautiful thing. To be able to see actually democracy in action and hear people who are normally marginalized and not able to have a voice. And for you guys to sit here and listen and hopefully actually really hear what we're saying. I know we can, Return Strong has a reputation for really being a little aggressive sometimes, but I do want to say this: our goal here today is not only to bring voices of people who don't have the opportunity to come here and sit and have a conversation, but also to be partners in finding solutions. And I think that is one thing I do want to give the new administration credit for, is that Director Dzurenda is like, I think my phone's on speed dial, the poor guy. But it has been, we've been able to really like work and solve issues. When Return Strong first started showing up in 2020, our call was for communication and transparency. Those are our people, our loved ones, our children, our spouses, our siblings that are in those prisons. And it creates anxiety out here where people in community, for kids at school, for people at work, that we're all trying to function with what is also happening. And so being part of this voice and all these people who take their vacation time and come here and sit to talk to you, I appreciate that you're listening. I hope that you really hear us and that we continue to do the work and grow and improve and address conditions within NDOC. And I'm gonna make a quick comment about food. Hopefully in a few months I won't have to talk about this experience. My husband got his board coming up in a few weeks and hoping he will be home if anyone wants to write a letter let me know [inaudible] about you write a support letter for him. But we, I was at visit the other day and we've had a really hard time. We came back on a violation, and it has right before COVID it was in November of 2019 when he came back, and he spent decades, most of his life in and out of prison. And we were talking about the food and like, why are we fighting about this all the time? And as our work group has been doing, we've been really doing research on understanding food insecurity in general, in communities, in prison across the country, in other countries, and how those things impact. And one of the things that he said to me this weekend was the degree of anxiety that he has when he sees food from store and commissary starting to dwindle even a little bit. Can't function. He's like "I'm sitting in programming, I'm not thinking about anger management, I'm thinking about 'oh my God, what am I going to do if I can't get food? What if she doesn't have money for food? What if' " and I think to discount the mental health impact that these [3 minutes reached] issues around food are having. Thank you for your time.
- My name is **Robert Abasta A-B-A-S-T-A**. I was recently incarcerated in NDOC and I was released. Our great state of Nevada supplied my meals these last six years. I can personally tell you about the quality and the quantity issues. There was this one time that all they served us was these burnt oatmeals where they didn't even put enough water in it to cook it and it was like burnt. And I'm talking burnt, I mean like black, like burnt. And we were told to eat it or starve, that they didn't care either way. Or the time that they did gave one little scoop of eggs, like two-ounce scoop of eggs. And they give it to you that and like a little thing of oatmeal. Like that's not a grown man's food, you know. They'll sit there give us two pieces of bologna with four breads tell us that that's our lunch. That's not even nutritional. I promise you that's not 30% of what you're supposed to be eating for lunch as far as nutrition and calories are concerns. They'll sit there give you one little peanut butter of the Lucky's peanut butter with two of diabetic jellies that you can't even eat nothing out of it and if you eat it it makes you more hungry because all it does is tease your stomach. They constantly underfeed us and then when the food comes from the kitchen the sample tray will call for x amount of scoops they'll give you half of that if they start to run out instead of calling the kitchen "hey you need to make more food for unit X," they'll just sit there and be like not just cut the ration short. And then this they give us a little give us little portions of low quality food and that and that's illegal. I looked up the word cruel in the Webster dictionary and the meaning is, "disposed to inflict pain and suffering, devoiding of human emotions." That's exactly what they're trying to do to us when they feed us less than human. Calling our food chow, telling us it's chow time. We're not dogs, we're human beings. We have feelings. We

might have made mistakes but it doesn't give you a right to torture us with our food, under serve us, give us food that is meant for dogs. I used to work in the kitchen. I've personally seen the boxes and say "not for human consumption." Would you want to eat that? Would you want your kids to eat that? We make mistakes but we're still humans. And I asked the CO what that means "not for human consumption." I was I think I was 19 at the time when I seen that. I don't know what that means and he told me to mind my business and just keep on loading the boxes. We might, we have rights protected to us by our constitution of no cruel and unreasonable punishment. I've seen and known firsthand at NDOC sends and serves food that's expired. And I'm not talking about a month expired, I'm talking expired and they'll sit there and still send wherever the main undocking place is, to the facilities. And that we were told to serve them because I speak up about things. I said, "Hey sir this expired you want me to put it back in the truck?" He said, "No, put it in the kitchen or you're fired." I have no choice, this man's over me so you know. But that's all I just want to say, and I hope you know everybody's testimony [inaudible] help fix things for the better.

- My name is **Karen Juarez J-U-A-R-E-Z**. Good morning. My loved one is a member of Return Strong and I am here to make sure that his voice and our voices are heard. I know you have already heard a lot about food insecurity. I want to make a brief point regarding some of the solutions we have heard and are being considered. One is that NDOC will give people choices on the menu once they receive the tablet. Choice is an amazing thing. Having choices is always better than no choices, but our concern is that this is a symbolic choice that will not truly address all the complexities that are part of the food. Lack of food, hunger, food vendor contracts, rotten food, approved menus versus what is actually served. These are complicated layers of problems that are rooted, and I believe that root can be used as a punishment, as a means to dehumanize human beings. How would you feel if you sat down to eat and were given food with rodent feces in it? And maggots. Or packets of maple syrup to make up missing calories. Choice is great when we are given multiple good choices to choose from and there is an oversight and accountability to ensure that choices are followed through on. We are thrilled tablets are coming but they don't walk on water and we can't pretend that they do. As we continue to say, let's find real solutions, not Band-Aids. Thank you.
- Hi my name is **Vivian Jones J-O-N-E-S**. I have a son that's incarcerated in NDOC for 20 years. We've heard it all. You know, we heard everyone's story of Return Strong in other words. And we, we're not here to bash NDOC, but to bring awareness and for things to change. My son don't complain a lot but he do let me know what's going on in there, you know. And I noticed that he told me about the portions of food and all that. But he just don't, you know, say too much. But when we in visiting, I noticed how he eat and I'll be just like, you want more? You want more? You know it's like he, it's like I bring \$50, it's gone. And that stuff is very expensive up in there. He eating two cheeseburgers, a chicken sandwich, [inaudible] chips, drinks. It's like he's basically starving. Like you can see, like I'm gonna eat all I can before I get in there. I'm a single parent, too, you know. So, me sending money in there is expensive for me but I've been doing it for 20 years, you know. I believe in justice. I believe, you know, they went to prison, they did the crime, they need to do their time. But I do also believe in the Eighth Amendment. And I just thank you guys for listening to us and we just here to bring awareness of what the different things that's going on in the prison. Thank you.

Governor Lombardo confirmed with clerk that members of the Board were in receipt of all electronically submitted public comment.

3. Acceptance and Approval of Minutes – May 25, 2023

Action: A motion made by Attorney General Ford to approve the minutes was made. Motion passed; minutes approved.

4. Chief Medical Officer Report – Representative from the office of Dr. Ihsan Azzam, Ph.D. MD, MPH; Nevada State Chief Medical Office – Exhibit: DHHS

Vincent Valiente with the Division of Public and Behavioral Health presented the Board with the Chief Medical Officer's report on behalf of Dr. Issam. As of the date of the report, July 6, 2023, unannounced dietary and sanitation inspections occurred in three prisons: High Desert State Prison, Florence McClure Woman's Correctional Center, and Southern Desert Correctional Center. All remaining dietary and sanitation inspections of correctional facilities will be completed by the end of year 2023. Data tables were provided to the Board and publicly posted summarizing the critical findings during inspections.

Zero deficient practices were identified regarding nutritional compliance during the inspections. The nutritional adequacy inspections look for certified menus in place and being followed by the facility, that the meal served at the time of inspection was consistent with the menu, spreadsheets with portion sizes provided, or other means of documentation reviewed for portion sizes provided, substitutions documented, and certified menu and nutritional values were available for offender review.

Medical inspections for 2023 have been scheduled to be completed in September and October of this year. The two facilities will be Ely State Prison and Lovelock Correctional Center. The next Nevada Board of Commissioners report from the Chief Medical Officer will summarize additional data gathered in 2023 including medical dietary sanitation and nutritional adequacy.

Attorney General Ford voiced concern that information presented differs from what was heard in public comment relative to menus and portion size. Requested more information on how inspections are performed.

Vincent Valiente indicated the inspection is random, unannounced, and a snapshot in time for the current day and prior 72 hour menus. Verifies any menu substitutions are documented as well as reviewing warehouse of each facility for the stock of food being delivered to the kitchens. Also verifies menu is created by a licensed dietitian.

Attorney General Ford asked if the inspector talks with offenders when looking at nutritional adequacy.

Vincent Valiente indicated he only speaks to offenders if he observes a situation of non-compliance that can be corrected at the time by providing them with training. He will discuss with the Chief Medical Officer the possibility of having additional conversations with offenders during inspections.

Attorney General Ford asked for clarification as to documented corrective action to be taken but notes that critical violations are consecutive repeated violations cited over several years.

Kristina Shea, Deputy Director of Support Services with Nevada Department of Corrections stated it is important to the agency to get into corrective action as quickly as possible. Funding for critically needed as culinary systems have been inadequately funded over the past ten legislative sessions. There is a CIP project to replace dishwashers from the 82nd legislative session and the department is working with State Public works to be able to move forward on the corrective actions needed.

Attorney General Ford reiterated his willingness to assist to effect the necessary changes so these items can be addressed and moved forward. He stated he would like to see improvement in this effort by the next meeting.

Governor Lombardo requested clarification on what we are in the process of immediately addressing. **Director Dzurenda** explained that some items have already been approved through CIP and being discussed with State Public Works. Funding was to be discussed with Interim Finance Committee but was pulled from August agenda for some reason, should be on the October agenda. Things discovered that were not addressed by the last administration or were brought up in legislation for CIP are being reintroduced to cover 100%.

Governor Lombardo requested information on funding.

Deputy Director Shea indicated the funding source as ARPA in the amount of \$8.2 million for the department.

Governor Lombardo requested that at the next meeting of this Board, State Public Works provide a document to present the status of the items identified, document Public Works's inventory or resource issues, and timeline associated with it.

Attorney General Ford stated he would also like HVAC issues to be part of the conversations with State Public Works and he will want a response on that when the time is right.

5. Director's Comments & Departmental Updates – James E. Dzurenda, Director, Nevada Department of Corrections

A. Introduction of new Medical Director

Dr. Ken Williams – Recently retired as Medical Director in the Tennessee Department of Corrections. Health Commissioner of the American Corrections Association (ACA).

B. Offender Nutritional Menu

January 2019, a change in the food services occurred and the state ended up going the direction to limit the amount of sodium and limit the amount of protein that can be in food. Aramark is the vendor and according to them, Nevada was the only state in the country that was providing this type of a meal to the offenders so the department is now going to be moving back to a menu that is basically how it was pre-2019; however it's going to match whatever Aramark found as the best menu that utilize in correctional agencies across the country. The department still will be providing medical special diets for those who medically need it and are approved. There is going to be a big difference in the quantity and the type of food that will be provided from this point on. October, or the first week of October, should see the new supply chain will be in and the offenders will be able to have access to a menu that will have nutritional value.

C. Re-Entry Program

Re-entry starts at day one when the offender comes into the agency utilizing the Nevada Risk Assessment tool. Re-entry includes a review of needs, both medical and mental health needs, and programming needs of the offenders the second they arrive to NDOC. All re-entry coordinators and case management staff utilized a tool (PIT) to see what each offender specifically needs to successfully get to the end of sentence or parole so that they can actually have the services they need before they

go out. NDOC puts our resources into programs that are going to make the impact. Research the best evidence-based programming that has been the largest tool in the country that works for behavior issues; Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT), Getting it Right, Good Intentions, Bad Choices, and Re-Entry Aftercare. These are not programs NDOC invented, they are programs that are administered nationally that are proven to be the most effective in re-entry.

August of every year we provide a recidivism rate study based on data over a three-year period so the data that you get from this month's re-entry report was the recidivism study that was started from the data from 2019. It's all the offenders that were released from the Nevada Department of Corrections in 2019 for whatever reason whether it was under sentence, whether it was parole, those offenders were studied and tracked over a three-year period of where they were, what they did, if they came back.

The recidivism rate did go down from the previous report. Currently NDOC's recidivism rate is 24.7. Women's recidivism rate went down while the men's recidivism rate went up. The number one effect on reducing recidivism was Vocational Education services and that will be a focus of NDOC to determine how those services can be delivered in facilities that do not currently have them. Surprisingly, Substance Use Disorder Treatment was expected to be number one in effective recidivism, but it was not for this past reporting period.

Attorney General Ford asked if other states are seeing better results with their programming.

Michael Williams, Statewide Re-Entry Administrator with Nevada Department of Corrections, explained how if there is not adequate staff to be able to offer these programs then there will not be much success. There are not Substance Use Disorder counselors at every institution and there are only 17 program officers to cover re-entry programs for the whole state.

Director Dzurenda described the new Vocational Village going into the Southern Desert Correctional Center. Through donation, there will be a training pad for tractor trailer driving training, with donated tractor trailers to teach offenders how to drive and obtain their CDL license. There is a huge demand for these jobs. Additionally, NDOC is partnering with Hope for Prisoners to deliver job skills such as carpentry, HVAC, plumbing and electrical to any offender so they can obtain their licensing and certifications so they can have a sustainable living.

- D. Use of Force Audit, LA22-11 Department of Corrections, Audit Action Items
Legislative Audit Report LA 22-11 was issued to the Nevada Department of Corrections on May 22, 2022. The purpose of the audit was to evaluate the department's processes over the use of force reporting and certain related activities. The audit report contained 16 recommendations to improve the department's process over the use of force report and in certain related activities. The department accepted the 16 recommendations. The Nevada Department of Corrections has successfully completed and corrected the 16 deficiencies identified by the LCB audit. Administrative Regulations have been or are being modified to reflect corrective action taken to those instances where regulatory change is required. Training of all involved staff is being conducted and will continue to be conducted as new staff are hired promoted or transferred in order to maintain a level of proficiency. The 16 audit recommendations can be found on the LCB Audit Division website under legislative audits 2021-2022 Department of Corrections Use of Force LA 22-11.

6. Administrative Regulations presented to the Board of Prison Commissioners for discussion and possible action.

- AR 100 – Administrative Regulations
Development, distribution, and implementation of Administrative Regulations in accordance with 233b Nevada Administrative Procedure Act.
- AR 507 – Restrictive Housing
Restrictive Housing definitions, classification, and operations in support of Senate Bill 307.
- AR 513 – Solitary Confinement
New Administrative Regulation containing definitions, classification, and operations of Solitary Confinement in support of Senate Bill 307.
- AR 613 – Access to Care
Minor changes for improved clarity and consistency.
- AR 614 – Health Classification
Minor changes for improved clarity and consistency.
- AR 623 – Health Care for Women
Minor changes for improved clarity and consistency. Updates in support of Assembly Bill 292 are not reflected in the body of AR 623 as they are contained in the Medical Directive for female offenders.
- AR 819 – Nevada Risk Assessment System (NRAS)
New Administrative Regulation to ensure use of Nevada Risk Assessment System tool to maintain fidelity.

Action: There was a motion, and it was seconded, that ARs 100, 613, 614, 623, and 819 be approved.

Action: There was a motion for modification/re-drafting, and it was seconded, that ARs 507 and 513 be edited, approved by Director Dzurenda as temporary ARs, and be presented to the Board for final approval at the next meeting of this Board.

Attorney General Ford requests that Medical Directives, which are not required to be reviewed and approved by the Board, be presented to the Board for awareness going forward.

- 7. Public Comment (2nd Period):** Second of two sessions to address the Board of Prison Commissioners. Comments are not limited to agenda items (3 minute maximum per speaker). Public comment is transcribed as spoken with minimal edits such as deleting a repeated word. Note: public comments were also accepted in written form via email until 9 p.m. the day before the meeting as indicated on the publicly posted agenda.

Carson City:

- My name is **Lisa Foley F-O-L-E-Y**. I'm a volunteer with Return Strong. Like you I am a member of the Nevada State Board and my understanding is that all the Nevada State Boards, maybe an exception of one or two, have given permission to set up the ability to phone in and make comments but this one.

So far this committee, your Board of Prison Commissioners, has not yet set up the phone call option. I'm asking if you could expedite that for all future meetings so that the working people of Nevada can be included. Thank you.

- Good afternoon. **Nicole Williams** for the record. I want to thank the Board of Commissioners and the NDOC for their effort to correct and fix the continued issues and problems that we have been addressing during the public comment for the past couple of years. We clearly do not need Band-Aids. We need to get to the root of these problems. Root cause analysis, realize the problem, gather data, determine causal factors, identify the root cause, recommend, and implement solutions. So, looking forward to the next Board meeting, updates, and corrective actions that have been taken. Thank you.

Las Vegas:

- Thank you, my name is **Crystal Voight V-O-I-G-H-T**. I wanted to say thank you for everything that you've been doing to work on this issue. The two things I'm going to ask for is follow-up and accountability. The pressure point becomes not only what can we do now to limit the bleeding while we work towards long-term solutions, but how do we actually provide a nutritional foundation that'll give people a chance at leaving prison better than they came. Providing more calories of unhealthy food addresses hunger but not wellness. Providing choice of menu items gives the appearance a choice, but it does no good if we don't include healthy food options and then serve them items on the approved menu that will never truly solve the problem with prison and food. We will only continue the game of smoke and mirrors. We are asking you to please ensure that we are having open conversations with impacted people and provide true accountability with sustainable solutions. Yes, stop the bleeding - but let's work together to heal the harm that's being cost. Thank you.
- Good morning. My name is **Valerie Mays**. I took the time off work today to be here to make sure that Director Dzurenda and each of you hear from families at High Desert. Not just for myself and my situation because I might not be personally, sorry I'm a little nervous, be as deeply impacted because of [inaudible] I have been able to work out with my job, not everyone has this privilege. Not everyone lives close enough to get out of work and drive to visits. They have second jobs, and some have third jobs and are going to school. They live in other states and countries. I'm not sure if you have ever really stopped to think about it, but for families, what we have in common is we have a loved one that's incarcerated in Nevada. But we come from every walk of life. We live literally all over the world. What we have in common with you is we love our loved ones that are in prison. And we need and want to be able to sit down, look in their eyes, and know they are okay. Especially under the conditions at High Desert. Sometimes the only time they can leave that darkness and have every moment to breathe and feel loved and cared about and humans I live in constant fear, worry for my loved one and his safety at High Desert. It is a known problem at NDOC. You recently had someone climb the cage and kill another person. We know the story, but where were the COs? Where are the cameras? Why do we pretend that the only violence is inmate to inmate and not include the culture, fear, and violence that is also pertained by so many of guards? Ending weekend visitation is equivalent of ending visitations for many families and their loved ones. We aren't stupid. We understand that staffing has been problem. We are asking you to give us a voice, listen to us. Push the date back so that you can take hearing the concerns and considering them and the changes that are coming and finding solutions that actually fall into the value you have talked about, families and strengths. Warden Williams's decision could not have happened alone so we are asking Administration to help us or let us help you find solutions that value every family, not just the loved ones with privileges. My visit with my husband is all he has to look forward to. He is doing his best to program and get home to start a new chapter. Those few hours are lifeline to people who love him and have faith. I love waiting

for him. They remain him as human and desire in love just like every other person that walks in visitor room. Don't take that away from us. Thank you for your time and I pray you really hear from us.

- My name is **Kalae Casorso K-A-L-A-E C-A-S-O-R-S-O**. I have a loved one at HDSP. One of the only ways that I can support him, aside from sending money, is by visiting. Recently we found out from a memo and the correction officers that our visitation schedules were changing on September 11th. I want to take a minute to explain just how this impacts our family. First, I moved to Las Vegas from Colorado to be here to support my loved one. He has been in prison now nearly 13 years and has only had a handful of visits in that 13 years from his disabled mother who resides across the country. Along with moving 750 miles to be closer to attend visits on a weekly basis, I changed my work schedule to accommodate the current visiting schedule for my loved one on Friday and Saturday. I work in a corporate environment and need to be available to work Monday through Thursday. Changing my current schedule to accommodate visiting once again is nearly impossible. These changes occurred with very little warning and started as rumors that couldn't be verified. There are so many people that this will cause so many issues for. What about people that have children or live far away? I know families that come from other countries, or drive and travel from other states. I know a family that schedules their visits to come on long weekends and holidays to spend time with their loved one because they don't have vacation time to come across the country for a three-hour visit. It's a lot to coordinate. And for every one of us that are here today there are hundreds of families that can't be here to get the two-minute comment. We know this isn't on the agenda, but we also know that you all choose to press pause and take time to listen to us. How deeply are you going to help or prevent damaging families by these discussions and also to work with us, to help us work, help find a workable solution? We are positive they exist. Your Director Dzurenda and our Director Jodi proved during the legislative session that they can work together and are problem solvers. We know Warden Williams made this decision due to the pressure he is under. We are asking everyone to please stop, listen, and look for a better solution that respects the work and pressure of Corrections and the need for our families to stay connected. Thank you.
- Hello, my name is **Tia Turntine T-U-R-N-T-I-N-E**. My loved one is at High Desert. I'll try to make it short. I'm here on the behalf of families including our children. I'm a grandmother, so my grandchildren are impacted. I'm a working mother grandmother. My husband is at High Desert. We have a total of 19 grandkids, one on the way, nine children. We are back and forth out of state. His mother has health issues, she's back and forth out of the state. The visiting changes does not work for all of us. Not just my household but several of us, so you're going to consistently hear about this. We've voiced our concerns to Sergeants, to Lieutenants, on shirts made in Sweden. Williams and Director Dzurenda. So my situation is I work a job. Monday through Friday is my schedule. It's a set schedule. It doesn't have any flexibility for weekends. I operate two businesses. So my schedule is minimized to whatever I can squeeze in. Where the visiting is was hard to do. I've done it changing a mother a grandmother an employee and a business owner. My grandchildren coming in from out of state to visit their grandfather and this is just starting. We've had visitings canceled due to staffing issues. It's a known issue. We are aware of this and there's got to be a way to change it. The schedule is not going to work for our children. My grandchildren. It's not going to work with them. They're not going to be able to see their father. My two stepchildren live in California. Wednesdays and Thursdays are not going to be an option for them to see their father. He's been incarcerated for 13 years, their whole lives. So, the only time that they get to see him is once or twice a year. You guys are going to take that away from him [inaudible] with this change. There's got to be another way. We're not saying that we don't understand the staffing issues, we do. But there's has to be a different resolution. And we're just asking you to be heard and understood. And at least put it off until there's something that's more beneficial to everyone in the cloud.

- Hello. My name is **Caitlin Ahern A-H-E-R-N**. I have taken the time off work today to urge you to reconsider allowing, excuse me, to reconsider allowing High Desert and Warden Williams to eliminate weekend visits. Eliminating weekend visits will now, will not allow families to support one another financially and mentally. Due to this change, many couples, parents, siblings, and friends will not be able to see each other on a regular basis and have a conversation longer than the 15-minute phone calls. Young children have a hard time connecting with their incarcerated loved ones as it is. This new schedule would drastically limit, if not eliminate, options for school-aged children and children with a working parent to visit their family members. If we don't stop this, it is becoming a state-sponsored version of parental estrangement. I know it might sound dramatic, but it is that serious. Additionally, this new visitation schedule would impact family's ability to continue to work and attend visitations on a regular basis and keep that connection that cannot be maintained without seeing eye to eye in person. Many others and I have already altered our work schedules to attend visitation on the previous schedule and we would need to request changes again with limited notice to adjust to this change. We are already struggling to financially support our families without our loved ones and now would be required to take time off work or request changes again to attend visits and continue to maintain the important family bonds that are built in the visiting room. Please support families and help us stop the implementation of the proposed change. We are not saying things have to be exactly the same that they were, but we want a voice in finding solutions that will work for all families. Your constituents, our communities. Eventually most people will come home. Don't make them come home to strangers. Thank you for your time.
- Hello. My name is **Sarah Clark C-L-A-R-K** and my husband and I are members of Return Strong and I'm here today to support families at High Desert and the plan to cancel weekend visits. While I may not be directly impacted by this change, I'm standing in solidarity with them because I can't stop thinking about the what if. What if that was implemented at Southern Desert? Our family would be devastated. Firstly [inaudible] Sunday this is as it is but my job isn't flexible. Just like many other families and usually the families that don't have flexibility are also the families that are working low-wage jobs just to survive. Rent and food and day care and health care. Our survival outside of prison without our loved ones financial help. Then we also take care of our loved ones as best as we can. Now in order to do that Decisions by the state have separated us even further. I work full time and I'm only able to visit for a few hours on Sundays. Then I have to leave and go to work just to survive. If this happened at Southern Desert or if he was moved to High Desert it would end all possibility of our family being able to spend time together at all. What would you do if it was your husband, or wife, or child? How hard would you fight to make sure you protect that time you have? Attorney General Ford, I see you on social media with your kids and how proud you are of them. God forbid they made a mistake and end up in prison. How hard would you fight to protect your only opportunities to see them? To love them? All of you at this table are family men, and we are family women and we will fight too. Thank you.
- **Robert Abasta A-B-A-S-T-A**. So, so just real quick, I just wanna bring an issue on that it's been on my heart since it happened. I had a friend, his name was Isaiah Sharp, he was killed by his cellie even though his cellie previously to that was single-celled and kept writing kites 'do not put someone in my cell, I don't want nobody in my cell, you put someone in here I will kill him,' going on for a couple months and they still put my friend in that cell even though they have proper warning. But they just neglected it. So, my issues with the classification of how you do it? Because you, you put a young, I'm not gonna say, he was a good kid. So yes, he's a very good-hearted kid, and you put him in the cell of somebody who's in there not only for murder, but is telling you he's going to kill the person you put in there, not to put in anybody in there. And so that's my issue I just want to bring up. I'm pretty confident you guys have heard about it. You know what I'm saying. It happened I believe the start of 2021 after that, but uh that's just my issue I wanted to bring and address because it was a good

person. He was supposed to get out I think three weeks after that happened. He was supposed to get out. This was like the day before his birthday, and I just want to bring that up and stuff.

- My name is **Vivian Jones J-O-N-E-S**. I just wanted to make a statement that we fought really hard to get the visiting going. I spoke on a bill the SB 351 for ex-felons to be able to see their loved ones. My son was incarcerated for 20 years and I wasn't able to see him for 20 years since he was 16 now he's 36. And to take away the weekend visits will it be very difficult with uh family members that have children that you take them out of school so they can come to a visit. So once again, we're just here to bring awareness how that can affect families. Not just our children, but all, everybody that's in the NDOC. So we want to just uh remember that we fought hard to change the law, change that law. So we just like need to stick with it a little bit okay I'm simple. You're welcome.
- My name is **Jodi Hocking J-O-D-I H-O-C-K-I-N-G** and bringing something today to the second public comment period. It's not on the agenda anywhere which is, I understand, but it's concerning. And I also understand that the people that are in this room right now do not have the power or authority at this moment to do anything about it. But when we go by Return Strong the Uproar, the Uproar is a loud impassioned cry to raise the voices of people that don't have a voice for themselves. Today I want to raise the voice of Christian Walker who died in the NDOC custody on April 15th. About a week ago the, sorry, we actually personally knew Christian so this is like not somebody that we know from letters. Somebody who we know. We know the family. We sit with them on a regular basis to try to help her through this. Um yesterday we were able to see pictures of Christian post-death, as we say post-murder. And the coroner's report says that Christian died of natural causes of high blood pressure but with a normal heart. There was no damage to his heart. When we saw these pictures, we've been waiting since April, when we saw the pictures his eye socket was broken and his eye was hanging out. His face was broken and so swollen that it verified what the first responder had originally told us back in April that when they looked at him, he was not recognizable as a human. He had been beaten so badly He had bruises and black and blue marks that match what looks like a baton on his face and his entire back. The inside of his lips are bruised. His eyes were black and blue. His ears were bruised. He had defensive wounds on his hands. It's clear when you look at this, this was not a, he didn't die of natural causes. And so, I wanted on the record, on public record that we are going to fight. When we started this organization, we always have said, started during COVID, and we've always said we always have a choice to either do something, or do nothing when you're faced with injustice. I will take my last breath fighting for Christian Walker and this is a tiny sample of the people that will show up, too. We are begging you to make sure that who is responsible for his death is punished. If we are going to be tough on crime and we're going to punish people from the street, from wherever, for whatever, they're murderers [three minutes reached] murder one we have- the rules have to apply to everybody.
- **Sonia Williams** for the record. We talked we briefly talked about the audit the use of force audit. I just have just a couple questions to think about. Like you spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on body cams you know and then paid license fees. You guys paid licenses fees every year. My question is if those body cams were on the four officers that beat Christian to death, would he be alive today? The audit also addresses weapons that are unauthorized but are still in the arsenal years after they have been removed. If the officers that murdered Christian had gotten a hold of them would they have just shot him instead of beating him to death? It's rumored that the Corrections Officers are saying that they are not trained in de-escalation. Do they need to be trained not to beat somebody to death? Your proposals in response to the use of force audit include [inaudible] reports of all in custody deaths involving force. If not, it needs to, and we are demanding it to be added.

8. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:33pm.

APPROVED THIS 14th DAY, MONTH OF MARCH, IN THE YEAR 2024

GOVERNOR JOE LOMBARDO

SECRETARY OF STATE FRANCISCO V. AGUILAR

ATTORNEY GENERAL AARON D. FORD

Minutes prepared by D. Madsen, Executive Assistant, Nevada Department of Corrections