

Alaska State Legislature
Senator John Coghill
State Capitol Room 119
Juneau, AK 99801

April 21, 2016

Dear members of the Alaska Legislature:

We have followed the work of the Alaska Criminal Justice Commission and the Legislature on corrections reform and are writing to express our support for Senate Bill 91.

As correctional officers in Alaska, our top priority is ensuring safety and security in the institutions for inmates and correctional officers. Recent investigations into conditions in Department of Corrections institutions have highlighted serious issues with under-staffing that place both inmates and officers at great risk. Positive interventions and rehabilitative programming only become possible inside our institutions when a baseline of safety and security have been met. While Alaska's correctional officers are highly professional and competent, we cannot maintain that baseline of security with extreme staffing shortages. We applaud the efforts of state leaders to find safe, evidence-based ways to reduce the inmate population by making changes to who comes to prison and how long they stay.

Senate Bill 91 adopts research-based pretrial release practices, focuses prison beds more on serious and violent offenders and less on low level offenders who can be effectively supervised in the community, and strengthens offender supervision on probation and parole. These changes will safely reduce Alaska's average daily prison population and save hundreds of millions in marginal per-inmate costs. We welcome that population reduction and the associated improvements in our staff-to-inmate ratios. We also welcome the suggested reinvestment into additional treatment and programming for offenders in institutions and in the community. Please call on us if you believe we can be helpful in supporting Senate Bill 91.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Zane Nighswonger in black ink, followed by the text "COIII".

Zane Nighswonger, Correctional Officer III

Handwritten signature of Bruce Busby in blue ink.

Bruce Busby, Director of Institutions

Handwritten signature of David Joslin in black ink.

David Joslin, Correctional Officer IV

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Clare M Sullivan".

Clare Sullivan, Deputy Commissioner for Institutions

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Shriver".

Ron Shriver, Correctional Officer III

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Mahnke".

Cathy Mahnke, Correctional Officer III

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessie Behrends".

Jessie Behrends, Correctional Officer II

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dean Williams".

Dean Williams, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Corrections

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerrod Andrews".

Jerrod Andrews, Correctional Officer II

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tomi Anderson".

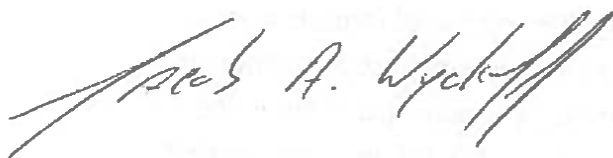
Tomi Anderson, Superintendent

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Geiger".

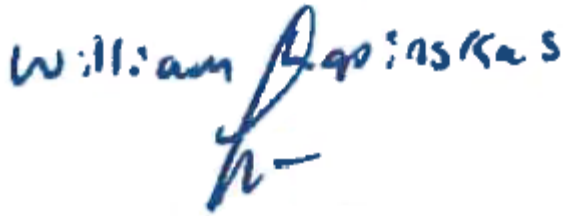
Emily Geiger, Probation Officer III

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "D. Marshall, MPA".

Dean Marshall, Superintendent

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fred A. Wyckoff".

Jacob Wycoff, Correctional Officer IV



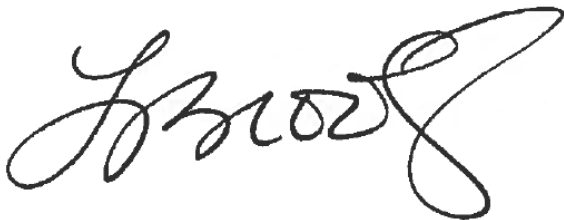
William Lapinskas, Superintendent



Debbie Miller, Re-Entry Project Manager



Adam Rutherford, Chief Mental Health Officer



Laura Brooks, Deputy Director Inmate Health Care



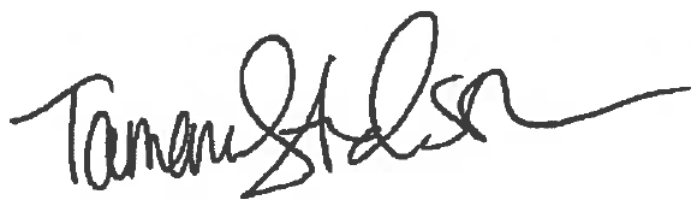
Marianna Miranda, Correctional Officer IV



Berni Troglia, Probation Officer III



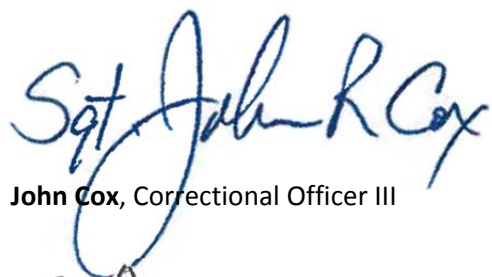
Kay Hoover, Executive Secretary



Tamara Axelsson, Superintendent



Iva Cooney, Correctional Officer II



John Cox, Correctional Officer III



Carrie Belden, Director of Probation and Parole



Judith Martin, Probation Officer II



Marissa Lapinskas, Probation Officer I



Monica Hinders, Probation Officer III