



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

Department of Corrections
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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February 19, 2014

The Honorable Wes Keller
House Judiciary Chair
State Capitol, Rm 118
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Keller:

Thank you for allowing the Department of Corrections an opportunity to address the committee regarding HB 218 Penalty: Assault on a Correctional Employee. At the February 12, 2014 hearing, Rep. Millett asked a question regarding inmate Jose Perez. Mr. Perez was party to a decision issued by the court of appeals which allowed the possibility of deportation to mitigate his sentence for assaulting a state's witness while at the Lemon Creek Correctional Center.

The Department makes every effort to ensure the safety of its inmates and staff. At times, this requires separating certain inmates from each other. The Department relies on behavior while incarcerated as well as communications from the court, law enforcement, and the District Attorney's office to determine whether certain inmates need to be separated. Once this determination is made, separatee documentation is completed and verified by the Department's central classification unit. This unit monitors the separatee status of each individual and ensures that the inmates are not housed in situations where they have access to each other.

Mr. Perez and J.W. were remanded for similar crimes on 1/05/11. At that time, J.W. was not Mr. Perez's victim nor was the Department made aware that J.W. was a witness in Mr. Perez's case. On 1/11/11, Mr. Perez assaulted J.W. while they were both incarcerated at Lemon Creek Correctional Center. Mr. Perez faced appropriate institutional disciplinary action for the assault, and was charged with assault in the fourth degree as well as interference with official proceedings. From that point on, Mr. Perez and J.W.'s housing was monitored so as to prevent access to one another.

I hope this helps explain the Department's separatee protocols. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ronald F. Taylor".

Ronald F. Taylor
Deputy Commissioner for Re-Entry and Population Management