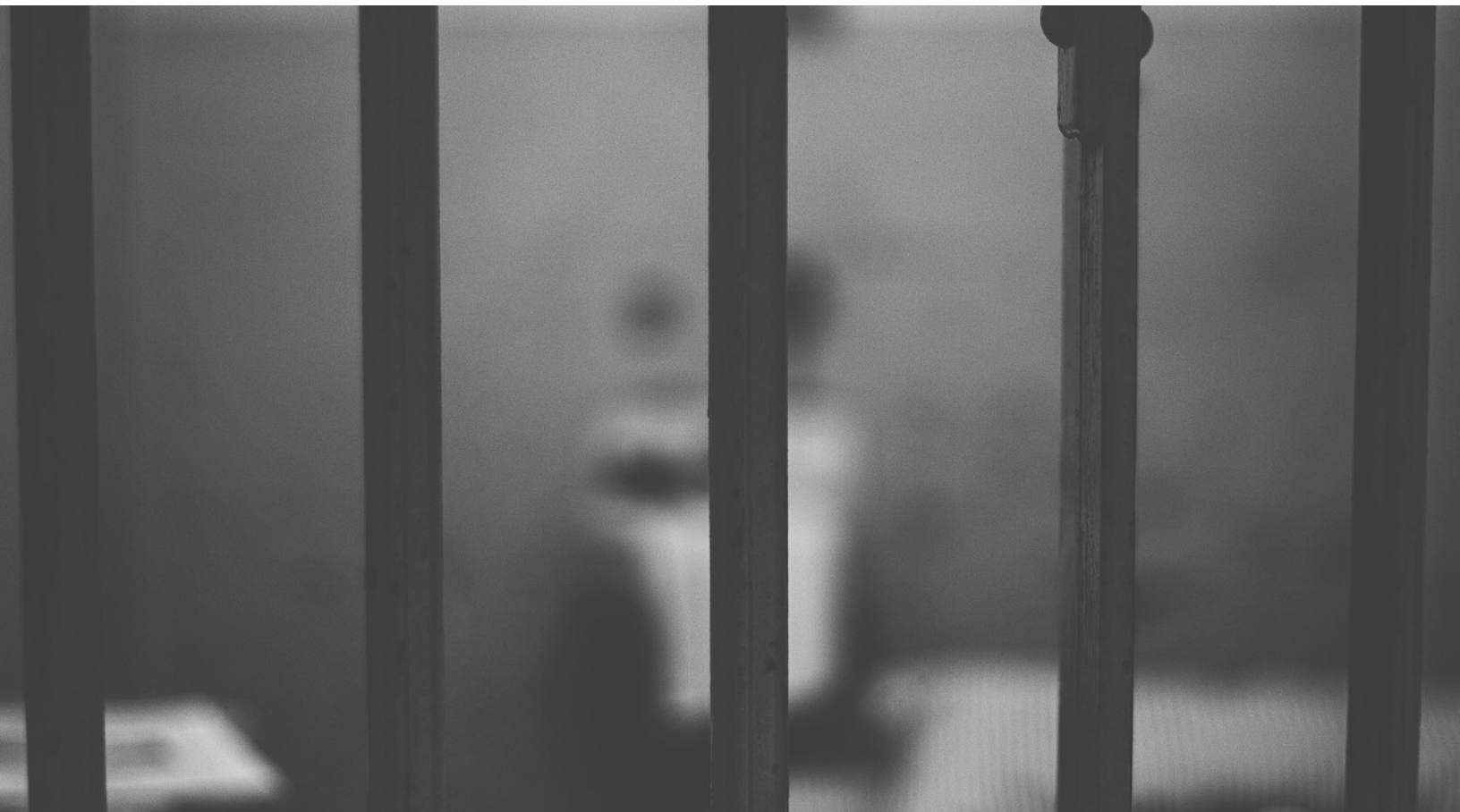


ALASKANS HAVE ALREADY SPOKEN



PRIVATE FOR PROFIT PRISONS

ARE NOT FOR ALASKA

AND WILL NOT SAVE THE STATE MONEY



“ Alaska should heed the lessons it has already learned: private prisons are interested only in increasing profits for their shareholders, do not save Alaska money, and decrease public safety. ”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PRIVATE PRISONS ARE NOT IN ALASKANS’ OR ALASKA’S BEST INTEREST

Alaskans decided private prisons were not in their best interest and voted multiple times against private prisons in their communities. In 2006, the Alaska State Legislature also concluded out-of-state private prisons do more harm than good and passed legislation bringing incarcerated Alaskans home. Unfortunately, *“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”* Alaska should heed the lessons it has already learned: private prisons are interested only in increasing profits for their shareholders, do not save Alaska money, and decrease public safety.

HIDDEN COSTS

Closing state correctional facilities to send Alaskans, and Alaska jobs, to out-of-state private, for-profit prisons fails to consider the hidden costs associated with private prisons. Private prisons cut corners and shift costs to the State to increase their profits. Hidden costs and resulting effects include:

- Increased Recidivism
- Lengthening Incarceration
- Prisoner Security Levels
- Compromised Security
- Medical Expenses
- Transportation
- Prisoner Labor Costs
- Administrative Costs
- Litigation Costs
- Bed Guarantees
- Economic Impact on Alaska Communities

PRIVATE PRISONS ARE DANGEROUS AND DECREASE PUBLIC SAFETY

The primary difference between Alaska correctional facilities and private prisons is that a private prison’s primary purpose is to create a profit for its shareholders. Because of this mandate, private prisons cut corners and compromise safety to increase their bottom line. Compromising safety costs the State by increased crime and harm to every Alaskan who is victimized by a hardened, private prison criminal who commits another crime upon returning to Alaska. Conversely, the Alaska correctional system *“provides secure confinement, reformatory programs, and a process of supervised community reintegration to enhance the safety of our communities.”*¹

¹ www.correct.state.ak.us/



In 2018, Governor Dunleavy made the public commitment to all Alaskans that public safety would be his top priority and asked the Legislature to do the same.

Public safety was the number one issue for this campaign. And I believe it is the number one issue for Alaskans. We have some of the worst statistics in the country. There's no denying that. Our sexual assault rates are through the roof. Our property crime is through the roof. We have a murder rate in Anchorage that is twice that of New York City, for example... Primary function of any governor, and the state government, to be frank, is to keep people safe.²

In 2016, the Federal Department of Justice completed a review into the use of private prisons by the Federal Bureau of Prisons. In conjunction, then Deputy Attorney General stated:

[PRIVATE PRISONS] SIMPLY DO NOT PROVIDE THE SAME LEVEL OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES, PROGRAMS, AND RESOURCES; THEY DO NOT SAVE SUBSTANTIALLY ON COSTS; AND AS NOTED IN A RECENT REPORT BY THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL, THEY DO NOT MAINTAIN THE SAME LEVEL OF SAFETY AND SECURITY.³

Furthermore, the Federal Department of Justice 2016 Review found that:

The three contract prisons we visited were all cited by the BOP [Borough of Prisons] for one or more safety and security deficiencies... Contract prisons also had higher rates of assaults, both by inmates on other inmates and by inmates on staff.⁴

² www.ktuu.com/content/news/Gov-Dunleavy-to-make-public-safety-announcement--502002401.html

³ 2016-08-18 - DOJ Memo - Reducing our Use of Private Prisons www.justice.gov/archives/opa/file/886311/download

⁴ U.S. Department of Justice - Review of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Monitoring of Contract Prisons (2016), Page ii, oig.justice.gov/reports/2016/e1606.pdf



State correctional facilities are the only way to realize the Governor's public safety commitment to Alaskans. Closing Alaska correctional facilities to send Alaskans out of state to private prisons does not improve public safety and will not save the State of Alaska money.

ALASKA HAS A HISTORY WITH PRIVATE PRISONS AND CORRUPTION

Alaska has already witnessed the negative effects of private prisons' interests in Alaska. According to a 2007 Anchorage Daily News article,

A federal judge on Monday said that former state Rep. Tom Anderson "sold the public trust" and sentenced him to five years in prison for seven felonies involving corruption in office.... Evidence in the trial showed that he participated in a scheme to push the interests of a private prison company in exchange for what turned out to be nearly \$26,000 in payments.⁵

ALASKANS HAVE SPOKEN, CONTINUOUSLY REJECTING PRIVATE PRISONS FOR DECADES

The lost income to Alaska's economy, increased crime, and hidden costs associated with private prisons ensures there are no cost savings. There is no need to relive the mistakes of the past by closing Alaska correctional facilities and sending Alaska jobs and money out of the State.

⁵ 2007-12-21 (updated 2016-05-12) - ADN - Ex-legislator Anderson sentenced to 5 years in prison
www.adn.com/politics/article/ex-legislator-anderson-sentenced-5-years-prison/2007/12/21/

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PRIVATE PRISONS WILL NOT SAVE ALASKA MONEY

Research shows that private prisons cost more while providing fewer rehabilitative services.

- The State of Arizona found that prisoners in private prisons rarely cost less than those in state correctional facilities, and in some cases cost as much as \$1,600 more per prisoner per year, despite the fact that private prisons handpicked the healthiest and least costly prisoners.⁶
- The Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy found that, “[t]here is no compelling evidence that the privatization of prisons has actually resulted in savings...”⁷
- In 2019, an audit performed at the request of the Georgia House of Representatives indicated, “... that privately run prisons are more costly for the state of Georgia than those run by the state.”⁸

Addressing whether private prisons save money, a private prison representative admitted, “There is a mixed bag of research out there. It’s not as black and white and cut and dried as we would like.”⁹

Having initially succumbed to the falsehood that private prisons save money, between 2000 and 2016 many states ended their contracts with private prisons, including Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Nevada, North Dakota, Utah, and Wisconsin.¹⁰ The states of Iowa, Illinois, New York, and the local governments of Pima County, King County, and the City of Tucson have banned the use of private prisons in their jurisdictions, along with the country of Israel.¹¹ Over time, the promised, long-term cost savings never materialized, and rather, states saw numerous other problems as a result.

HAVING INITIALLY SUCCUMBED TO THE FALSEHOOD THAT PRIVATE PRISONS SAVE MONEY, BETWEEN 2000 AND 2016 MANY STATES ENDED THEIR CONTRACTS WITH PRIVATE PRISONS, INCLUDING ARKANSAS, KENTUCKY, LOUISIANA, MAINE, MICHIGAN, NEVADA, NORTH DAKOTA, UTAH, AND WISCONSIN.

6 www.nytimes.com/2011/05/19/us/19prisons.html

7 Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy, “Are Florida’s Private Prisons Keeping Their Promise?” Page 4, www.privateprisonnews.org/media/publications/fl_ctr_for_fiscal_and_economic_policy_private_prison_policy_brief_apr_2010.pdf

8 2019-01-01 – New audit says private prisons are not more cost-effective than state-run prisons www.allongeorgia.com/georgia-state-politics/new-audit-says-private-prisons-not-more-cost-effective-than-state-run/

9 Corrections Corporation of America representative, www.nytimes.com/2011/05/19/us/19prisons.html

10 Capitalizing-on-Mass-Incarceration (2018), Page 5, www.sentencingproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Capitalizing-on-Mass-Incarceration.pdf

11 www.abolishprivateprisons.org/privatization_bans

THE HIDDEN COSTS OF PRIVATE PRISONS

Most private prison contracts are based on a model wherein the private prison is paid a set amount per bed, per day. Therefore, private prisons have an incentive to use cost-shifting factors in order to cut costs in every possible way, to the detriment of Alaskans they are supposed to be safely incarcerating and rehabilitating.

INCREASED RECIDIVISM¹²

Increased criminal recidivism rates among prisoners incarcerated in private prisons may be the largest hidden cost of prison privatization. **Private prisons create better criminals, which consequently creates more crime and more victims in Alaska's communities.** A study by the Minnesota Department of Corrections found that compared to prisoners released from state correctional facilities, prisoners incarcerated in private prisons were 13 percent more likely to be arrested again, and 22 percent more likely to be convicted again.¹³ An Oklahoma study similarly found that imprisonment in a private prison increased the likelihood a person would commit another crime after release by up to 16.7 percent.¹⁴ The more time a prisoner spent at a private prison, the greater the recidivism hazard.

Contact with a support system is crucial to reducing recidivism. A study of 7,000 people released from Florida prisons found that those receiving visitors were 31 percent less likely to commit another crime than those who did not.¹⁵ In 2018, a bipartisan criminal justice bill, signed by the President of the United States, became law that requires federal prisoners be incarcerated no more than 500 miles from their primary residence.¹⁶ Alaskans incarcerated in out-of-state private prisons will suffer elimination of most, if not all, of the visits from individuals in their support system, and will therefore be at increased risk for returning to prison. This significantly increases the cost of private prisons.

IN 2018, A BIPARTISAN CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL, SIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, BECAME LAW THAT REQUIRES FEDERAL PRISONERS BE INCARCERATED NO MORE THAN 500 MILES FROM THEIR PRIMARY RESIDENCE.

¹² 2016 ITPI-how Private Prison Companies Increase Recidivism, www.inthepublicinterest.org/wp-content/uploads/ITPI-Recidivism-ResearchBrief-June2016.pdf

¹³ "The results showed that offenders who had been incarcerated in a private prison had a greater hazard of recidivism in all 20 models, and the recidivism risk was significantly greater in eight of the models." Duwe & Clark, "The Effects of Private Prison Confinement in Minnesota on Offender Recidivism," Minnesota Department of Corrections, Page 28, www.privateci.org/reports_files/MNPrivatePrisonEvaluation_WebsiteFinal.pdf

¹⁴ Andrew L. Spivak and Susan F. Sharp, "Inmate Recidivism as a Measure of Private Prison Performance," Crime and Delinquency 54, no. 3 (July 2008): 482-508. shareok.org/bitstream/handle/11244/25482/10.1177.0011128707307962.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

¹⁵ In the Public Interest, "How Private Prison Companies Increase Recidivism," research brief, June 2016, Page 6, www.inthepublicinterest.org/wp-content/uploads/ITPI-Recidivism-ResearchBrief-June2016.pdf

¹⁶ www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/5682/text

In contrast, Alaska's current programming efforts have a positive impact on recidivism and are saving the State money. In 2017, the Alaska Justice Information Center conducted an Adult Criminal Justice Program Benefit Cost Analysis which found that, *"Overall, Alaska offers adult criminal justice programs with impressive recidivism reduction effects. Notably, the expected percentage recidivism reduction for community-based sex offender treatment was 32.4 percent. Eight programs, including all the therapeutic courts were expected to reduce recidivism between 20.0 percent and 26.3 percent."*¹⁷ It found, *"The value of an avoided conviction for an offender previously convicted of a felony (any type) was estimated to be between \$115,755 and \$150,694."*¹⁸

**Table 6-2. Comparison of Program Ranks:
Benefit Cost Ratio versus Expected Recidivism Reduction**

6-2a. 'Ranked by benefit cost ratio				6-2b. 'Ranked by expected recidivism reduction			
Rank	Report ID	Alaska program name	Benefit cost ratio	Rank	Report ID	Alaska program name	Average recidivism reduction
1	SAP-1	PsychEd	\$23.80	1 (t)	SX-1B	SOTX-community (FY17)	32.4%
2	VGE-1	General Ed.	\$10.58	1 (t)	SX-1A	SOTX-community (FY15)	32.4%
3	VGE-2	Vocat. Ed.	\$7.11	3 (t)	TC-4	Felony Drug Court	26.3%
4	SX-1B	SOTX-community (FY17)	\$6.33	3 (t)	TC-3B	Hybrid Courts as Drug Courts	26.3%
5	SAP-3	IOPSAT-DD	\$4.89	5	VGE-1	General Ed.	23.4%
6	SAP-2	IOPSAT-prison	\$4.87	6	VGE-2	Vocat. Ed.	21.9%
7	SX-1A	SOTX-community (FY15)	\$4.43	7	SAC-2	PACE	21.8%
8	SAC-2	PACE	\$3.07	8	TC-5	Mental Health Courts	20.6%
9	TA-1	EM-sentenced*	\$3.03	9	TC-1	Misd. DUI Court	20.2%
10	SX-2	SOTX-prison outpatient	\$2.38	10 (t)	TC-3A	Hybrid Courts as DUI Courts	20.0%
11	SAP-4	RSAT	\$1.97	10 (t)	TC-2	Felony DUI Courts	20.0%
12	SAC-3	ASAP	\$1.51	12(t)	SX-2	SOTX-prison outpatient	17.7%
13	SAC-1B	IOPSAT-community (FY17)	\$1.32	12(t)	SX-3	SOTX-prison TC	17.7%
14	TC-4	Felony Drug Court*	\$1.22	14(t)	SAP-3	IOPSAT-DD	17.4%
15	TC-5	Mental Health Courts*	\$1.16	14(t)	SAP-2	IOPSAT-prison	17.4%
16	SAC-1A	IOPSAT-community (FY16)	\$1.08	16	SAP-1	PsychEd	15.2%
17	TC-3B	Hybrid Courts as Drug Courts*	\$0.80	17	SAP-4	RSAT	11.9%
18	SX-3	SOTX-prison TC	\$0.72	18	SAC-3	ASAP	8.9%
19	TC-3A	Hybrid Courts as DUI Courts*	\$0.69	19	TA-1	EM-sentenced	3.2%
20	TC-2	Felony DUI Courts*	\$0.60	20 (t)	SAC-1B	IOPSAT-community (FY17)	2.5%
21	TC-1	Misd. DUI Court*	\$0.34	20(t)	SAC-1A	IOPSAT-community (FY16)	2.5%
22	DV-1	Community BIPs	(\$0.13)	22	DV-1	Community BIPs	-0.7%

(t) indicates tied rank.

As shown in the table above, *"Fourteen programs had benefit cost ratios ranging from \$1.08 to \$23.80. A ratio of greater than \$1.00 means that programs generated monetary benefits exceeding costs."*¹⁹

Private prisons directly benefit from more prisoners and longer sentences, but Alaska suffers with each new victim associated with increased recidivism, as well as the costs to incarcerate an individual again for new crimes.

¹⁷ 2017-09-29 – UAA Justice Information Center – Adult Criminal Justice Program Benefit Cost Analysis, Page 4, scholarworks.alaska.edu/bitstream/handle/11122/7961/ajic.2017.results-first-acj-report.pdf

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

LENGTHENING INCARCERATION

Private prisons increase their profits by lengthening prisoner incarceration. The longer prisoners remain behind bars, the greater the earning opportunity for private prisons, and the greater the cost to Alaska. A 2017 study concerning prisoners in Mississippi showed that prisoners in private prisons were incarcerated *“up to 90 additional days”* longer than prisoners in state correctional facilities, *“which equals 7 percent of the average time served.”*²⁰ The study found that private prisons issued significantly more *“prison conduct violations”* than those in state correctional facilities, thereby increasing the length of incarceration and making it harder to get parole.²¹ Punishment is determined by Alaska judges and courts. Private prisons should not be allowed to increase their profit margins by extending a prisoner’s sentence, resulting in increased costs to Alaska.

PRISONER SECURITY LEVELS

In most cases, private prisons incarcerate only minimum and medium security adult males and leave the most expensive prisoners for state correctional facilities to incarcerate. This causes the average cost at state correctional facilities to appear higher. Per their public safety mandate, Alaska correctional facilities must incarcerate all sentenced Alaskans. This includes more expensive individuals with serious medical and mental health conditions, maximum-security prisoners, and those with life sentences. The Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy found, *“[t]here are differences between inmates in private and public prisons: those who are more costly to handle are usually incarcerated in public prisons, such as those who are the highest security risks and those with extensive medical issues.”*²² One Arizona State Representative described this private prison strategy as, *“...cherry-picking... They leave the most expensive prisoners with taxpayers and take the easy prisoners.”*²³

PUNISHMENT IS DETERMINED BY ALASKA JUDGES AND COURTS. PRIVATE PRISONS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO INCREASE THEIR PROFIT MARGINS BY EXTENDING A PRISONER’S SENTENCE, RESULTING IN INCREASED COSTS TO ALASKA.

COMPROMISED SECURITY

To generate a greater profit, private prisons hire fewer security staff, provide them with inadequate training, and pay them inadequate wages. Additionally, private prison guards do not have to meet the same hiring standards as Correctional Officers in Alaska, who must meet rigorous Alaska Police Standards Council hiring, training, and certification requirements. This lack of standards results in reduced safety for incarcerated Alaskans, staff and the public.

20 Impacts of Private Prison Contracting on Inmate Time Served and Recidivism (2017), papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2523238

21 *Ibid.*

22 Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy, “Are Florida’s Private Prisons Keeping Their Promise?” Page 3 www.privateprisonnews.org/media/publications/fl_ctr_for_fiscal_and_economic_policy_private_prison_policy_brief_apr_2010.pdf

23 www.nytimes.com/2011/05/19/us/19prisons.html

MEDICAL EXPENSES

Medical and mental health care is expensive, especially when treating diseases that are more prevalent in the correctional setting than in the general population. In 2018, the Alaska Department of Corrections estimated that a prisoner is 1200% more likely to have Hepatitis C, 100%–300% more likely to have a serious mental illness and twice as likely to have a sexually transmitted disease compared to other Americans the same age.²⁴ The Alaska Department of Corrections also reported that 65% of Alaska prisoners have a mental illness, 80% have a substance use disorder, and 75% are overweight, obese or morbidly obese.²⁵ Private prisons reduce costs by capping medical care or excluding certain medical costs entirely, which then revert back to the State. Typically, those with known medical needs or those needing costly medical procedures such as chemotherapy, dialysis and even organ transplants remain in state correctional facilities.²⁶

TRANSPORTATION

The substantial cost of transporting prisoners to and from private prisons is often not included in the daily rate. The Hawaii Department of Public Safety found transportation costs for sending prisoners to and from private prisons on the mainland were \$1,506,144 in one year alone.²⁷ Like Hawaii, Alaska is located far from the contiguous 48 states, and ongoing, high, travel costs will have to be paid by Alaska if Alaskans are incarcerated in out-of-state private prisons.

PRISONER LABOR COSTS

Although private prisons greatly benefit from prisoner labor, often the wages that prisoners receive are paid or reimbursed by the state. A contract between the Hawaii Department of Public Safety and a private prison in Arizona required Hawaii to reimburse the private prison monthly for prisoners' pay. Since prisoners work daily, year after year, even low wages add up. The cost levied on the State of Hawaii for prisoners' wages in one year was \$607,344, while the private prison benefited from the prisoners' labor.²⁸

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

Even if prisoners are incarcerated in private prisons, certain functions must still be performed by Alaska. These administrative duties would include, but are not limited to:

- Intake and initial classification for prisoners entering the prison system
- Planning, procurement, and budget development for private prison contracts
- Parole hearings and parole-related services
- Calculating prisoners' sentences and applying good time credits
- Recordkeeping for prisoners' institutional files and accounts
- Reviewing grievance appeals
- Reviewing and/or approving disciplinary decisions by private prisons
- Adjudicating lawsuits emanating from private prisons
- Responding to public records requests

24 2018-01-30 – Alaska DOC Presentation House Budget Subcommittee, Slide 14-15
www.akleg.gov/basis/get_documents.asp?session=30&docid=38835

25 *Ibid.*

26 Apples-To-Fish: Public and Private Prison Cost Comparisons (April 2016), Pages 523-524,
ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2565&context=ulj

27 *Ibid.*, Page 533

28 *Ibid.*, Pages 533-534

LITIGATION COSTS

The State is not excused from its responsibility to ensure a constitutional level of care and living conditions for Alaskans incarcerated in private prisons. Lawsuits and legal settlements often arise out of increased rates of incidents, injuries, and deaths that occur in private prisons. These costs generally are not included in private prisons' contracts, which if included would increase the daily rate. For example, a 2013 Hawaii State Auditor's report noted that state officials were not including litigation expenses when calculating private prison costs. The auditor determined that, "[T]hese costs, if included, would have the biggest impact on per capita costs for housing inmates in out-of-state facilities, since the biggest lawsuits involve these facilities."²⁹ In fact, private prison contracts often include protection in the form of reimbursement by the state for costs incurred by law enforcement agencies due to escapes from or riots that occur in private prisons.

BED GUARANTEES

Private prisons maximize their shareholder profits by incorporating minimum occupancy bed guarantees into their contracts.³⁰ These provisions insure a private prison is paid even if the beds are not being used by requiring states to pay for unused or unneeded bed space. Arizona was required to pay a private prison more than \$3 million for empty beds after removing hundreds of prisoners from a private prison as a security precaution after a 2010 escape.³¹ Since Alaska correctional facilities do not operate for profit, they do not have bed guarantees and therefore do not cost the State money unnecessarily.

ECONOMIC IMPACT ON ALASKA COMMUNITIES

Alaska's economy will be negatively impacted both in lost wages to Alaskans and the economic hardship additional crime will have on Alaska communities. If Alaska jobs are eliminated and laid off individuals can no longer afford to live in their communities, schools, businesses, and the economy will be negatively affected as well. For every additional crime committed there is another Alaska business or individual victimized. The impact of victimization cannot be viewed in economic terms alone. Victimization severely impacts Alaska in many ways, including well-being, quality of life, tourism, and economic growth, among others.



29 Apples-To-Fish: Public and Private Prison Cost Comparisons (April 2016), Page 533, ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2565&context=ulj

30 41 of the 62 private prison contracts reviewed (65%) contained minimum occupancy, bed guarantee provisions. How Lockup Quotas and "Low-Crime Taxes" Guarantee Profits for Private Prison Corporations, Page 6, www.inthepublicinterest.org/wp-content/uploads/Criminal-Lockup-Quota-Report.pdf

31 *Ibid.*, Page 9



PRIVATE PRISONS ARE DANGEROUS AND DECREASE PUBLIC SAFETY

The primary difference between an Alaska correctional facility and a private prison is that a private prison's primary purpose is to create a profit for its shareholders. Conversely, the Alaska correctional system *"provides secure confinement, reformative programs, and a process of supervised community reintegration to enhance the safety of our communities."*³² There is no other motivation for an Alaska correctional facility since there is no profit to be gained. Because of the mandate to make a profit, private prisons cut corners and compromise safety to increase their bottom line. Compromising safety is not only unethical, it costs the State by increased crime and harm to every Alaskan who is victimized by a hardened, private prison criminal who commits another crime upon returning to Alaska.

STAFFING SHORTAGES AND HIGH STAFF TURNOVER

The primary cost-cutting strategies private prisons use to increase profits include paying lower wages, having poorly trained staff, and hiring insufficient staff. Such strategies lead to chronic understaffing and high turnover. A Texas study reported a 90 percent turnover rate for the state's seven private prisons, while the rate for state correctional facilities was 24 percent.³³ Consequently, private prison guards tend to be inexperienced and susceptible to manipulation by prisoners. Lastly, private prisons have also been found to violate minimum staffing requirements:

*The Occupational Safety and Health Administration ruled against a private prison firm for severe understaffing and inadequate training in Mississippi in 2014 and a federal judge penalized another firm for misreporting its staffing levels in Idaho in 2013. The FBI even launched a criminal investigation into a private prison in Idaho in 2014 because the facility's correctional officers compensated for understaffing by negotiating with prison gang leaders to maintain order through the threat of gang violence, earning it the nickname "Gladiator School."*³⁴

³² www.correct.state.ak.us/

³³ "The Economics of Private Prisons," Page 5, www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/es_20161021_private_prisons_economics.pdf

³⁴ [Ibid.](#)

Staffing shortages and high turnover subject both staff and prisoners to a greater risk of violence, and the prisoners receive less quality rehabilitative care. An analysis of violent incidents at public and private prisons in Tennessee found that rates of violence at private prisons were 29% higher in 2010, 15.7% higher in 2011, 22.7% higher in 2012 and 15.8% higher in 2013 compared with state prisons.³⁵ A study in Idaho showed prisoners were twice as likely to be assaulted in a private prison than in a state correctional facility.³⁶ A 2016 U.S. Department of Justice report showed that in private prisons staffing issues resulted in more frequent assaults, use of force incidents, lock-downs, and more contraband being introduced into the facilities.³⁷ An Arizona Department of Corrections' report on an escape from the Kingman private prison found that the private prison staff members were "fairly 'green'" and that approximately one-third of the security staff had held their positions for less than three months.³⁸

A 2018 New York Times Article, Inside a Private Prison Blood Suicide & Poorly Paid Guards, reported:

...Frank Shaw, the [private prison] warden ..., could not guarantee that the prison was capable of performing its most basic function. Asked if the [private prison] guards were supposed to keep inmates in their cells, he said, wearily, "They do their best."³⁹

The Article went on to say:

...An inmate described another attack that occurred this year. He said a prisoner armed with a knife and a 4-foot section of pipe charged at him while he was being escorted to his cell by two [private prison] guards. Instead of helping him, he said, the two [private prison] guards ran away. The inmate said he was chained at the ankles, waist and wrists at the time. He estimated that the other prisoner assaulted him for three minutes before other [private prison] guards arrived and pulled the attacker off him. "They laughed and told him not to do it again," the inmate said, adding that the same man had beaten him with a pipe the previous month. At the prison infirmary, he said, the medical staff simply poured distilled water onto his puncture wounds and sent him back to his cell. "I was in excruciating pain," he said. It was not until three days later, the inmate said, when there was blood covering much of the floor of his cell, that he was taken to a hospital. He was treated for four stab wounds and a broken leg.⁴⁰

It is notable that these higher rates of violence at private prisons occur even though they usually incarcerate minimum and medium security prisoners. Alaska holds offenders at all security levels, including maximum-security. Alaska Correctional Officers are trained adequately and subsequently do not run away from prisoner disturbances. Furthermore, adequate training and staffing results in proper care provided promptly to the prisoner should they have injuries or illnesses.

35 Data included prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, prisoner-on-staff assaults and institutional disturbances, and violent incident rates were calculated based on the population levels at state and private prisons in Tennessee. Apples-To-Fish: Public and Private Prison Cost Comparisons (April 2016), Pages 555-556, ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2565&context=ulj

36 Rizzo and Hayes, "An Assessment of the Risks and Benefits," (2012), Page 6,

www.prisonlegalnews.org/media/publications/rizzo_report_on_assessment_of_risks_and_benefits_of_prison_privatization_2012.pdf

37 U.S. Department of Justice - Review of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Monitoring of Contract Prisons (2016),

oig.justice.gov/reports/2016/e1606.pdf

38 "An Assessment of the Risks and Benefits of Prison Privatization," (2012), Page 6,

www.prisonlegalnews.org/media/publications/rizzo_report_on_assessment_of_risks_and_benefits_of_prison_privatization_2012.pdf

39 2018-04-03 - New York Times - Inside a Private Prison Blood Suicide & Poorly Paid Guard,

www.nytimes.com/2018/04/03/us/mississippi-private-prison-abuse.html

40 2018-04-03 - New York Times - Inside a Private Prison Blood Suicide & Poorly Paid Guard,

www.nytimes.com/2018/04/03/us/mississippi-private-prison-abuse.html

DANGERS AND ABUSE IN PRIVATE PRISONS

When prisons operate on a for-profit basis, it is easier to find individuals who will sacrifice ethics for profits.

- In a 2009 “Kids for Cash” scandal, two Pennsylvania judges accepted money from two juvenile private prisons in return for sentencing juvenile offenders to time in those private prisons. Children as young as ten were sentenced for minor offenses and some were not advised of their right to have an attorney present at their court hearing.⁴¹
- The Walnut Grove Youth private prison in Mississippi was closed after a U.S. District Judge wrote that the private prison “allowed a cesspool of unconstitutional and inhuman acts and conditions to germinate.”⁴² The Department of Justice investigation found that sexual abuse, including brutal youth-on-youth rapes and “brazen” sexual misconduct by private prison staff who coerced youths, was “among the worst that we have seen in any facility anywhere in the nation.”⁴³
- In 2013, a private prison in Mississippi was called “barbaric” and the lawsuit filed claimed rapes, stabbings and beatings were “rampant.” Additionally, the lawsuit alleged, “Prisoner-on-prisoner stabbings and beatings are frequent because the locking mechanism on the cell doors can readily be defeated, and some [private prison guards] are complicit in unlocking doors to allow violence to occur.” The conditions at the private prison were called “a shock to the conscience of a humane society.”⁴⁴
- In a 2015 altercation in a medium-security private prison in Oklahoma, four prisoners died. A lawsuit, filed on behalf of one of the deceased, claimed that the fight resulted from staff negligence. It contends that private prison employees allowed contraband and encouraged drug-trafficking competition among prisoners.⁴⁵
- In 2015, Arizona ended its contract with a private prison after a riot left 16 people injured. A report found that the private prison failed to properly train its staff, or to expeditiously and successfully end the riots. Three prisoners escaped from the same facility in 2010 and murdered two members of the public.⁴⁶
- A 2017 audit of a Florida private prison found it deprived prisoners of heat and hot water for months to cut costs. Prisoners had flooded bathrooms daily and multiple other problems remained unrepaired for months.⁴⁷
- In 2010, the State of Hawaii sought to end its use of private prisons after two Hawaiian prisoners were murdered and allegations of abuse were made. “One inmate had been stabbed 140 times. Neil Abercrombie... governor of Hawaii at the time, declared that the policy of sending prisoners away ‘costs money, it costs lives, it costs communities.’”⁴⁸

These examples are only a snapshot of the documented abuses prevalent in private prisons.

41 2011-08-11 – NBC News – Pennsylvania Judge Gets 28 Years in ‘Kids for Cash’ Case,

www.nbcnews.com/id/44105072/ns/us_news-crime_and_courts/t/pennsylvania-judge-gets-years-kids-cash-case

42 DePriest v. Epps (2010), Page 5,

www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/d6_legacy_files/downloads/case/Walnut_OrderApprovingSettlement.pdf

43 U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, “Investigation of the Walnut Grove Youth Correctional Facility,” (2012),

www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/d6_legacy_files/downloads/case/walnutgroveDOJ.pdf

44 2013-05-30 – Mississippi prison run by Utah company called barbaric, archive.slttrib.com/article.php?id=56385710&itype=CMSID

45 2016-09-07 – Tulsa World – Estate of Oklahoma Man Who Dies in 2015 Prison Fight Sues Private Prison Company, www.tulsaworld.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/estate-of-oklahoma-man-who-died-in-prison-fight-sues/article_b3c28f4b-4074-56ac-8c58-5daf2a1bb457.html

46 2015-08-15 – AZ Central – Arizona Cuts Ties with Private Prison Operator After Kingman Riots,”

www.azcentral.com/story/news/arizona/politics/2015/08/26/arizona-kingman-riot-cause-corrections-department-report/32432963/

47 2017-02-25 – Miami Herald – Private Prisons Deprived Inmates of Heat and Hot Water for Months, Lawmaker Finds,

www.miamiherald.com/news/local/article134892534.html

48 2018-04-10 – New York Times – Escapes, Riots & Beatings, States Can’t Ditch Private Prisons,

www.nytimes.com/2018/04/10/us/private-prisons-escapes-riots.html



PRIVATE PRISONS OPPOSE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Unlike state correctional facilities, which are required to keep publicly available records pertaining to costs and conditions, private prisons are not obligated to collect or share comparable data. This lack of accountability shields private prisons from scrutiny. A U.S. Government Accountability Office report stated, “key decision makers, including [Bureau of Prisons] managers, OMB, and Congress, are not positioned to have the information needed to make the most cost-effective investment decisions.”⁴⁹

With such poor oversight mechanisms, states have had trouble negotiating fair contracts with private prisons. In Florida, for instance, it took the work of a forensic auditor to uncover the fact that private prisons were relying on excessive cost estimates in order to ensure the appearance of savings. In 2011, the Florida Governor’s office promised that the private contractor running six work-release programs would save the state \$550,000 annually. In reality, the contract cost \$3.3 million more over the next three years.⁵⁰

The lack of accountability also prevents states from enforcing contracts with private prisons. In New Mexico, private prisons had allowed staffing vacancies to exceed 10 percent in violation of their contracts. It was estimated that the two private prisons could be fined over \$18 million for these violations.⁵¹

A Florida audit found that:

...over an eight-year period, [private prisons] were overpaid around \$12.7 million – including \$4.7 million for vacant employee positions, \$5 million in “salary additives,” and \$2.85 million paid to [a private prison] for facility maintenance the company did not perform. “Our review showed numerous instances where [private prison] vendors’ interests were considered over the State’s interests....”⁵²

In 2013, an Idaho private prison had to admit it:

...had falsified staffing records and billed the state for almost 4,800 hours for vacant positions. “[E]mployees were being placed on the shift schedule who were not present within the building or who were actually working in other areas and in some cases were no longer employees of [the private prison],” said Boise attorney T.J. Angstman, who represents prisoners in a federal lawsuit related to high levels of violence at [the Idaho private prison].⁵³

49 Government Accountability Office, “Costs of Prison: Bureau of Prisons Needs Better Data to Assess Alternatives for Acquiring Low and Minimum Security Facilities,” (2007), Page 7. www.gao.gov/assets/270/267839.pdf

50 2017-04-12 – Miami Herald – Do Private Prisons Save Money as Promised? Maybe Not, but Legislature Keeps Approving, www.miamiherald.com/news/politics-government/state-politics/article144269749.html

51 2011-04-25 – Santa Fe New Mexican – Private-Prison Staffing Could Trigger Fines, www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/private-prison-staffing-could-trigger-fines/article_64a96428-73ed-5587-b551-3b146d49274b.html

52 Apples-To-Fish: Public and Private Prison Cost Comparisons (April 2016), Pages 550–551, ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2565&context=ulj

53 *Ibid.*, Page 551

PRIVATE PRISON CORRUPTION IN ALASKA

“ They’ve [private prisons] figured prominently into a lot of the problems we’ve had. ”⁵⁴

– Representative Bill Stoltze

Alaska correctional facilities lack a profit motivation while private prisons’ motivation to make money encourages fraudulent practices. Unsurprisingly, examples are abundant of private prisons engaging in corruption, fraud, or other unethical practices. Unfortunately, Alaska has also fallen victim to private prison corruption, resulting in one Alaska Legislator spending time in prison.

According to the Anchorage Daily News one federal judge stated,

*...former state Rep. Tom Anderson “sold the public trust” and sentenced him to five years in prison for seven felonies involving corruption in office.... Evidence in the trial showed that he participated in a scheme to push the interests of a private prison company in exchange for what turned out to be nearly \$26,000 in payments.*⁵⁵

Corruption by private prisons and their lobbyists in Alaska resulted in a federal investigation and multiple convictions.

*The ongoing federal corruption investigation, which has resulted in indictments or guilty pleas from 12 lawmakers, lobbyists and others, began with inquiry into a push to build a private prison in the state. Bill Weimar, once king of Alaska’s private halfway houses, pleaded guilty to corruption charges last year after funneling \$20,000 in 2004 to help a state legislative candidate, knowing that if elected the candidate would support his interest in building a private prison.*⁵⁶

Alaska did not construct a private prison, but the Alaska Legislature was besmirched by this private prison scandal as the prosecutor at the time concluded,

*What’s resulted from this conviction and the overall investigation as a whole is that the public’s faith in the integrity of our legislative system is eroded seriously...*⁵⁷

54 2009-03-15 – ADN – Prison Costs Raise Concern, www.adn.com/news/alaska/v-printer/story/723646.html

55 2007-12-21 (updated 2016-05-12) – ADN – Ex-legislator Anderson sentenced to 5 years in prison, www.adn.com/politics/article/ex-legislator-anderson-sentenced-5-years-prison/2007/12/21/

56 2009-03-15 – ADN – Prison Costs Raise Concern, www.adn.com/news/alaska/v-printer/story/723646.html

57 2007-12-21 (updated 2016-05-12) – ADN – Ex-legislator Anderson sentenced to 5 years in prison, www.adn.com/politics/article/ex-legislator-anderson-sentenced-5-years-prison/2007/12/21/

ALASKA ALREADY CHOSE TO BRING INCARCERATED ALASKANS HOME

With the opening of the Goose Creek Correctional Center in 2012, Alaskans previously held in private prisons returned to Alaska. Unfortunately, when they returned, they brought gang activity and violent behavior learned in private prisons with them, increasing the danger to staff, other prisoners, and the public. The private prisons in which they were held had made them more violent and better criminals.

An Alaskan incarcerated in a private prison for six years says he started the “Low Life” gang. He spoke of his experience to the media, which reported,

You know you start learning criminal ways out there. You start... it's kinda lawless. The staff members don't get paid enough, you know... They're pretty much minimum wage so they're easy to talk into bringing the dope sack... To put us all out of state was not smart... We came back seasoned criminals. We came back heroin junkies. We came back with Hepatitis.⁵⁸

The former director of a faith-based home for women in Juneau described the conditions of private prisons Alaskans were formerly held in as “horrendous.”

It's big business, and it's unfortunate that people are making money off the backs of socially, economically challenged, marginalized communities... Especially in Alaska, when we have so many rural areas, we're already at a disadvantage when they have to go to prison in our larger communities, let alone taking them out of state.⁵⁹

In 2019, Alaska Legislators expressed concern about what private prisons did to Alaskans as well.

They learned new tricks of the trade. They were housed with hardened criminals. They learned all kinds of new things. Then when they got released, they came back to Alaska, and they brought their gangs back to Alaska. I think this is a terrible idea to send these inmates out of state. There's a reason we stopped it years ago.⁶⁰

58 2019-02-13 – Alaska Public Media – Among Dunleavy's proposed DOC cuts, sending 500 prisoners out of state, www.alaskapublic.org/2019/02/13/among-dunleavys-proposed-doc-cuts-sending-500-prisoners-out-of-state/

59 2019-02-15 – Juneau Empire – State examining sending inmates out of state (again) to save money, www.juneauempire.com/news/state-examining-sending-inmates-out-of-state-again-to-save-money/

60 2019-02-15 – AK Ledger – Senators Say Dunleavy's War on Criminals is Lip Service, www.akledger.com/2019/02/15/senators-say-dunleavys-war-on-criminals-is-lip-service/

Incarcerating Alaskans in private prisons was a problem for the communities in Colorado as well. As reported in 2013,

Since its opening, the \$90 million Hudson [private] prison has been plagued with some public relations problems, the worst being a prison riot in 2010 after doors were unlocked and [private prison] guards locked themselves in an office for their protection. In 2011, an inmate attacked the warden with a padlock in a sock.... Last year, one prisoner died of a drug overdose, and a female [private prison] guard was sentenced last fall for sexual assault on a male prisoner...

Kevin Strobel, chief public defender in Greeley, said most of his staff's caseload in the prison - which was minor at best - dealt with prisoners already serving long Alaskan sentences, but who got caught with cigarettes in the prison, considered contraband, and a felony that if pleaded out, was supposed be served back-to-back from the original sentence... "You're essentially saying, when he finishes with the Alaska sentence, then he'll have to come back to Colorado, and probably parole out here, in a state where they have zero connections.... It created just more headache than what it was really worth."

He said the Alaskan prisoners need to go home to a system in which they're familiar.... "If the Alaska folks are headed back, it's probably best for them and best for Weld County."⁶¹

In 2006 the Alaska State Legislature passed Senate Bill 65 because it made more financial sense and reduced recidivism to incarcerate Alaskans in Alaska. Governor Frank Murkowski stated;

I have consistently supported finding a solution to the chronic problem of prison overcrowding in Alaska. Over a decade of gridlock has led to the failure to improve on what was supposed to be a temporary solution of sending prisoners to Arizona. The result has been the placement of more and more prisoners into community housing alternatives and the constant transferring of prisoners between locations to ensure the integrity of the system, all of which runs the risk of compromising the level of public safety being provided to Alaskans.... And finally, this bill will generate good paying, long-term jobs for Alaskans and end the export of over \$14 million per year to Arizona...⁶²



61 2013-04-13 - Greeley Tribune - Hudson prison's Alaskan inmates set to go home, www.greeleytribune.com/news/business/hudson-prisons-alaskan-inmates-set-to-go-home/

62 2004-09-07 Alaska Legislature Senate Journal for SB 65 in the 23rd Legislature, Page 3924-3925, www.akleg.gov/pdf/23/J/S2004-09-07.PDF

CONCLUSION

Private prisons cut corners to increase profits and shift costs to states by cherry-picking only the healthiest medium and minimum security males to incarcerate, leaving more expensive populations, such as those with expensive medical conditions and mental health issues, for the state to incarcerate; capping medical services; hiring fewer staff to supervise prisoners; providing less training; hiring applicants who would be unable to pass the standards imposed by the Alaska Police Standards Council; and incarcerating prisoners in private prisons with abhorrent conditions. Private prisons then shift costs to Alaska to include transportation to and from far away private prisons, litigation and healthcare costs based on increased assaults and negligence-driven ailments, bed guarantees, and billing the state for prisoner labor costs. In addition to all these costs, private prisons result in higher recidivism rates, which translates to more Alaskan victims.

Closing Alaska correctional facilities to send Alaskans, and Alaska jobs, to out-of-state private, for-profit prisons runs counter to public safety and rehabilitative and recidivism reduction efforts. It certainly does not consider the higher recidivism rate resulting from incarceration in private prisons, resulting in greater future costs. The lost income to Alaska's economy, and increased crime and hidden costs associated with private prisons ensures there are no cost savings.

**There is no credible reason to jeopardize Alaskans' safety
by sending Alaskans to private prisons.**



ADDENDUM

SENATE BILL 65 - BRINGING ALASKANS HOME

In 2006 the Alaska State Legislature passed legislation, SB 65, in order to build Goose Creek Correctional Center and bring incarcerated Alaskans back to Alaska, because it made more financial sense and reduced recidivism. Senator Lyda Green, prime sponsor of SB 65, spearheaded this initiative because:

The need for additional prison beds in Alaska has been recognized by the Legislature for a number of years. Currently, there are about 650 Alaskan prisoners being held in facilities outside of Alaska. The money that leaves Alaska to pay for the housing of these prisoners provides jobs and economic activity in Arizona instead of Alaska.

Senate Bill 65 provides legislative authorization for the expansion of state prisons by local governments. Under the provisions of SB 65, local governments would finance the construction of new prison facilities and additional beds at facilities currently owned by the state. The State of Alaska would then enter into long-term leases and operate the facilities as part of the state correctional system. This financing mechanism allows the state to acquire facilities with no upfront capital costs. It benefits both the state and local economies with construction jobs and long-term jobs in the facilities.⁶³

Testimony in support of SB 65 during the legislative hearings made the case for its ultimate passage into law. The important reasoning and sentiments expressed then are no different today. Per the meeting notes:

MR. CHARLES CAMPBELL, Director of the Division of Corrections 24 years ago, said he believes that SB 65 is an excellent bill from the standpoint of corrections... [he] feels it is crucial to bring prisoners back to Alaska from Arizona. Alaska's Constitution requires correctional administration to be based on of reformation and on the protection of the public. The state is not abiding by that requirement. Studies have concluded, unmistakably, that reasonable proximity to home and community resources is very important to provide released prisoners a better chance.⁶⁴

MR. MARC ANTRIM, Commissioner-designee of the Department of Corrections, told members that SB 65 is fully supported by Governor Murkowski and DOC. They believe SB 65 will fully meet the needs of DOC and this Administration's commitment to public safety...

63 2003-02-20 – Alaska Legislature Senate State Affairs Committee Minutes, Page 4-5, www.legis.state.ak.us/PDF/23/M/SSTA2003-02-201530.PDF

64 *Ibid.*, Page 10

*He opined state employees who go through the academies are the highest trained correctional officers in the Northwest. He stated, "We provide a product of the state that keeps our citizens safer than any alternatives...."*⁶⁵

SENATOR COWDERY asked if public facilities are safer than private facilities.

COMMISSIONER-DESIGNEE ANTRIM replied a number of studies lead to that conclusion.⁶⁶

MARY BOWERY testified via teleconference. She has extensive firsthand knowledge of private prisons in the state of Tennessee. Following are points regarding a comparative study of private and state prisons in Tennessee:

- As per contract, only healthy inmates were assigned to the private prison
- \$4,000 medical cap per inmate per year in private prison
- Only medium custody or lower inmates assigned to private prison
- State prison required to have an emergency response team
- Private prison was able to fill empty beds with inmates from other states
- If Tennessee inmates were injured by inmates from other states, Tennessee was liable for the medical and legal costs
- The state was required to handle an escape from the private prison because the private prison had no legal jurisdiction to handle the escape. State taxpayers were not reimbursed for the expense
- The private prison had a turnover rate of 100 percent in two years with 62.9 percent in the first six months
- The private prison had more idle inmates because there were fewer jobs for inmates and fewer educational or rehabilitation opportunities and programs
- The private prison had increased incident reports of violent acts⁶⁷

MR. FRANK SMITH testified via teleconference in support of SB65. He has worked in substance abuse programs, has visited prisons the world over and is familiar with the facilities Senator Green envisions... Having been involved in prison research for the last 30 years, he felt qualified to advise members of the importance of bringing prisoners closer to home. In fact, "That connection with family and support systems in the community is absolutely the most important thing in keeping Native Alaskans from going back to jail."

...MR. SMITH cited the example in which the court found that six Alaskan inmates were justified in escaping from the Arizona facility to get away from bad conditions. The court also found the private prison had no legal authority to confine Alaskans in Arizona....

MR. SMITH spoke to an article in the Anchorage Daily News that tracked visiting rates in Arizona. It found just four of 825 Alaskan inmates were getting regular visits.⁶⁸

65 2003-02-20 - Alaska Legislature Senate State Affairs Committee Minutes, Page 11 & 24, www.legis.state.ak.us/PDF/23/M/SSTA2003-02-201530.PDF

66 *Ibid.*, Page 24

67 Correctional Counselor III in a Tennessee private prison system. 2003-03-11 - Alaska Legislature Senate State Affairs Committee Minutes, Page 6, <http://www.legis.state.ak.us/PDF/23/M/SSTA2003-03-111535.PDF>

68 2003-03-11 - Alaska Legislature Senate State Affairs Committee Minutes, Page 6, www.legis.state.ak.us/PDF/23/M/SSTA2003-03-111535.PDF

MR. RON SWANSON, community development director for the Mat-Su Borough, testified the borough assembly passed a resolution supporting municipal owner state operated prisons on February 18, 2003. The development of newer and expanded prisons in Alaska municipalities would benefit Alaskans by providing construction and permanent year around prison jobs. Also, housing prisoners in the state would allow prisoners to be closer to their families and culture and would enhance rehabilitation....⁶⁹

MR. RONALD WILSON stated he has been a state employee and corrections officer for over 19 years, but he was representing himself. He said private prisons have not proven they can provide correctional services more cheaply than their public counterpart and any private prison cost savings comes through reduced staff expenses. Public employees have background checks, psychological evaluations, attend and pass the correctional officer academy, and meet Alaska [Police] Standard[s] Council requirements.... He quoted findings from several studies that indicated private prisons did not measure favorably compared to state run facilities and outlined specific examples of private failures in Alaska.⁷⁰

MR. DANIEL COLANG expressed support for SB 65. He said he has been employed by Department of Corrections for eleven years, but the views expressed were his own. His father, a World War II veteran, always encouraged him to vote because thousands of Americans died on the battlefield to safeguard that right. Because Alaskans have voted against private prisons two times, he asked the committee to honor that request.⁷¹

MAKO HAGGERTY... A private prison was voted down three to one on the Kenai Peninsula. He believes it's a state obligation to incarcerate prisoners and advised against importing a failed system into Alaska.⁷²

MR. FRANK SMITH... asked members to reexamine the bid process and also the lawsuits involving private prisons. He thinks private prisons are "a bad idea whose time has passed."⁷³

GEORGE WRIGHT, Juneau resident, testified... "the original concept was to keep Alaska inmates from going to Arizona." At the Arizona facility the water is bad and Alaska inmates are housed with and preyed upon by career criminals.⁷⁴

REPRESENTATIVE STOLTZE... "Our corrections model has shown that we have a professionally manned and safe model of public safety for corrections."⁷⁵

JIM LECRONE, Business Agent, Public Safety Employees Association (PSEA), a retired correctional officer, said... there are many statistics regarding the higher number of assaults in private prisons, both on staff and on inmates. He noted that there are fiscal repercussions associated with a higher assault rate....

⁶⁹ [Ibid.](#), Page 11

⁷⁰ [Ibid.](#), Page 11

⁷¹ 2003-03-11 - Alaska Legislature Senate State Affairs Committee Minutes, Page 12,

www.legis.state.ak.us/PDF/23/M/SSTA2003-03-111535.PDF

⁷² 2003-03-13 - Alaska Legislature Senate State Affairs Committee Minutes, Page 9,

www.legis.state.ak.us/PDF/23/M/SSTA2003-03-131550.PDF

⁷³ [Ibid.](#), Page 10

⁷⁴ [Ibid.](#), Page 11

⁷⁵ 2003-04-15 - Alaska Legislature House State Affairs Committee Minutes, Page 19,

www.legis.state.ak.us/PDF/23/M/HSTA2003-04-150802.PDF

MR. LECRONE noted that a six-year study done in California showed that the public [prison] sector had 11 escapes, while the private [prison] sector had 200 escapes, although it managed 40,000 less inmates.⁷⁶

CO-CHAIR GREEN stated the intent of the committee substitute is to authorize the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections to review multiple correctional facility location options, and to increase participant bids in the State with the purpose of bringing prisoner's being housed in out-of-state facilities back into Alaska. The high costs and inefficiencies incurred by transferring prisoners should be avoided.⁷⁷

SENATOR GREEN... The bill additionally, allows the State of Alaska to bring prisoners back from Arizona, directing that money into the State economy.⁷⁸

JODY SIMPSON, MEMBER, MAT SU BOROUGH ASSEMBLY, voiced support for SB 65. She noted that the Mat-Su Assembly adopted a resolution supporting the concept of establishing State-operated prisons for the following reasons:

- Pressing need to reduce overcrowding in Alaska prisons;
- Bringing home prisoners currently housed out of State;
- Providing needed construction and year-round jobs; and that
- Maintaining prisoners in-state, allows them to be closer to their families and culture, enhancing rehabilitation.⁷⁹

REPRESENTATIVE CROFT... reiterated his concerns regarding sole sourcing "privatization", creating a combination for the worst aspects of government and business.⁸⁰

76 *Ibid.*, Page 28

77 2003-04-15 - Alaska Legislature House State Affairs Committee Minutes, Page 41, www.legis.state.ak.us/PDF/23/M/HSTA2003-04-150802.PDF

78 2004-05-09 - Alaska Legislature House Finance Committee Minutes, Page 6, www.legis.state.ak.us/PDF/23/M/HFIN2004-05-091113.PDF

79 *Ibid.*, Page 9-10

80 *Ibid.*, Page 15



For additional information please contact the Alaska Correctional Officers Association

www.acoa.us

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