

*Dwight*  
*Correctional Center*

*Public Comments*

As of 04/29/2012

**RESOLUTION BY THE VILLAGE OF ODELL  
LIVINGSTON COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
SUPPORTING THE CONTINUATION OF THE OPERATION  
OF THE DWIGHT CORRECTIONAL CENTER**

**WHEREAS**, Governor Quinn and the Illinois Department of Corrections have announced the closure of the Dwight Correction Center, located in Dwight, Illinois; and

**WHEREAS**, the Dwight Correctional Center has been an integral part of the Illinois Correction System for over 80 years; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Illinois Correctional System is extremely overcrowded, and closing the Dwight Correctional Center would only exacerbate the problem and put public health and safety at risk; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Dwight Correctional Center is an integral part of the economy of the communities that make up Livingston County, including the Village of Odell, by providing over 400 jobs and the purchase of goods and services from businesses in the community, as well as housing; and,

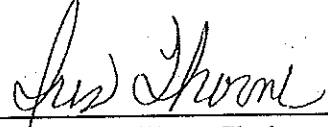
**WHEREAS**, the closure of Dwight Correctional Center would have a profound adverse economic impact on hundreds of employees and their families, as well as the greater community in which they live; and,

**WHEREAS**, the economic impact on area counties, municipalities, schools and other valuable institutions would be devastating.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Village of Odell joins with other communities, counties, governmental bodies and interested persons and organizations in urging that all efforts be made to maintain operation of the Dwight Correctional Center, and that steps be taken to develop a long-term plan for all correctional facilities so that host communities and employees do not experience the uncertainty of future potential closures.

**PASSED** by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Odell, this 19 day of March, 2012.

  
Tony Noonan - Village President

Attest:   
Iris Thorne - Village Clerk



# **BANK of PONTIAC**

March 27, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
Attn: Facility Closure  
703 Stratton Building  
Springfield, Illinois 62706

**Re: Dwight Correctional Center**

To Whom It May Concern:

Bank of Pontiac is a strong community bank that has served the banking needs of Livingston County and the surrounding area since 1947. We believe in serving and reinvesting in our communities by supporting local schools, churches, clubs, and organizations. In addition to our two facilities located in Pontiac, we also have full service branches in Odell and Dwight.

The bank is deeply concerned about the possible closure of the Dwight Correctional Center and the effect it would have on the Dwight area. The loss of individual jobs and services provided by local businesses could greatly harm the local economy. Recent studies indicate that the closure of the facility would result in a loss of up to \$40 million to all of Livingston County. The quality of life would eventually decline, as the far-reaching consequences of a closure would alter the local school system, the volunteer fire department, as well as churches and other service organizations.

Bank of Pontiac appreciates the commission's fair consideration of all facts and hopes the conclusion of this matter will result in the decision to *keep Dwight Correctional Center open*. Thank you.

Sincerely,

BANK OF PONTIAC

Bill Kauffman  
President & CEO

BK/jr

**MAIN BANK**  
300 W. Washington St.  
P.O. Box 710  
Pontiac, IL 61764-0710  
Phone 815/844-6155  
Fax 815/842-2977

**ODELL BANK**  
200 S. Waupansie St.  
P.O. Box 350  
Odell, IL 60460-0350  
Phone 815/998-2131  
Fax 815/998-2431

**WEST BANK**  
1703 W. Reynolds St.  
P.O. Box 72  
Pontiac, IL 61764-0072  
Phone 815/842-1069  
Fax 815/842-1705

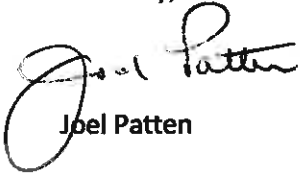
**DWIGHT BANK**  
132 E. Main St.  
P.O. Box 189  
Dwight, IL 60420-0189  
Phone 815/584-1855  
Fax 815/584-1934

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

From: Joel Patten Dwight resident

I'm opposed to the Illinois Department of Corrections planned closure of the Dwight Correctional Center. As a business man in the town of Dwight this will have a devastating affect on our town as well as the surrounding area. It has been estimated the closure of Dwight correctional Center would mean a \$40 million loss to the Livingston County economy; costing jobs, the purchase of goods and services from many of our local businesses and either uprooting families from our town or folks losing their jobs altogether. Certainly there are better ways to save the state money while keeping Dwight Correctional Center open. I ask for your support in NOT closing the Dwight Correctional Center.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel Patten". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Joel Patten

**VILLAGE OF DIAMOND  
RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE DWIGHT  
CORRECTIONAL FACILITY**

**WHEREAS**, the Village of Diamond supports economic development activities that promote business development, stimulate employment opportunities, and produce a positive effect upon the tax base, standard of living, and quality of life in the region; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Quinn and the Illinois Department of Corrections have announced the closure of the Dwight Correction Center in Dwight, Illinois, and

**WHEREAS**, the Dwight Correctional Center has been an important part of the Illinois Correction System for over 80 years, and


**WHEREAS**, the Dwight Correctional Facility is an integral part of Dwight's, Livingston and Grundy County's and Central Illinois' economy by providing over 400 jobs and the purchase of goods and services from numerous area businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, the closure of Dwight Correctional Center would have a significant, negative financial impact on hundreds of employees and their families, communities, counties, schools and other valuable institutions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village of Diamond has carefully reviewed the potential closing and adverse impacts on the County as a whole and the Village strongly recommends keeping the Dwight Correctional Center open.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in consideration of the significant negative economic and public safety effects the closure of the Dwight Correctional Facility would have on the area, the Village of Diamond hereby resolves to oppose the closure of the Dwight Correctional Facility.

**Approved this 27<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2012.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

(Seal)



**Attest:**  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

City of Fairbury  
RESOLUTION TO OPPOSE THE CLOSURE OF THE DWIGHT CORRECTIONAL  
FACILITY

WHEREAS, the City of Fairbury, supports economic development activities that promote business development, stimulates employment opportunities, and produces a positive effect upon the tax base, standard of living, and quality of life in the region; and

WHEREAS, the Dwight Correctional Facility, is an instrumental component of the regional economy by providing over 360 jobs to area residents; and

WHEREAS, the Dwight Correctional Facility provides an additional 77 jobs to area residents through vendors and contractors at the facility; and

WHEREAS, the closure of the Dwight Correctional Facility would result in an additional 400+ indirect job losses (totaling 800+ jobs lost) and cost the regional economy over \$45 million annually; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois prison population is severely overcrowded and closing the Dwight Correctional Facility would only exacerbate the problem and put public health and safety at risk.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the significant negative economic and public safety effects the closure of the Dwight Correctional Facility would have on the area, the City of Fairbury hereby RESOLVES TO OPPOSE the closure of the Dwight Correctional Facility.

Resolved this 21<sup>st</sup> Day of March 2012.

City of Fairbury

By: Robert P. Walter J.  
CORPORATE AUTHORITY

**VILLAGE OF SAUNEMIN  
RESOLUTION TO OPPOSE THE CLOSURE OF THE  
DWIGHT CORRECTIONAL FACILITY**

**WHEREAS**, THE Village of Saunemin, supports economic development activities that promote business development, stimulates employments opportunities, and produces a positive effect upon the tax base, standard of living, and quality of life in the region: and

**WHEREAS**, the Dwight Correctional Facility, is an instrumental component of the regional economy by providing over 360 jobs to area residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the Dwight Correctional Facility provides an additional 77 jobs to area residents through vendors and contractors at the facility; and

**WHEREAS**, the closure of the Dwight Correctional Facility would result in an additional 440+ indirect job losses (totaling 800+ jobs lost) and cost the regional economy over \$45 million annually: and

**WHEREAS**, the Illinois prison population is severely overcrowded and closing the Dwight Correctional Facility would only exacerbate the problem and put public health and safety at risk.

**NOW THEREFORE**, in consideration of the significant negative economic and public safety effects the closure of the Dwight Correctional Facility would have on the area, the Village of Saunemin hereby **RESOLVES TO OPPOSE** the closure of the Dwight Correctional Facility.

Resolved this 13<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2012.

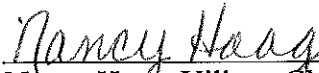
Village of Saunemin

By: 

Robert Bradford, Village President

(seal)

Attest:

  
Nancy Haag, Village Clerk

**A RESOLUTION BY THE VILLAGE OF EMINGTON  
LIVINGSTON COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
SUPPORTING THE CONTINUATION OF THE OPERATION  
OF THE DWIGHT CORRECTIONAL CENTER**

**WHEREAS**, Governor Quinn and the Illinois Department of Corrections have announced the closure of the Dwight Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois; and

**WHEREAS**, the Dwight Correctional Center has been an integral part of the Illinois Correction System for over 80 years; and

**WHEREAS**, the Illinois Correctional System is extremely over capacity, resulting in unsafe conditions, and the closure of Dwight Correctional Center does nothing to reduce this overcrowding; and

**WHEREAS**, the Dwight Correctional Center is an integral part of Dwight's, Livingston and Grundy County's and Central Illinois' economy by providing over 400 jobs and the purchase of goods and services from numerous area businesses; and

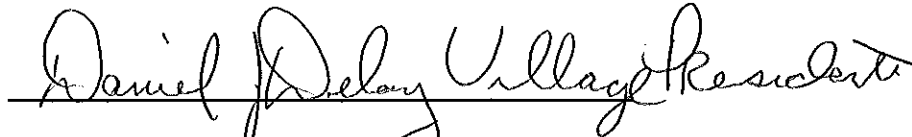
**WHEREAS**, the closure of Dwight Correctional Center would have a significant impact on hundreds of employees and their families, relocation away from their home communities or loss of employment, creating a destructive effect on their families and their future; and

**WHEREAS**, the financial impact on area counties, municipalities, schools and other valuable institutions would be devastating,

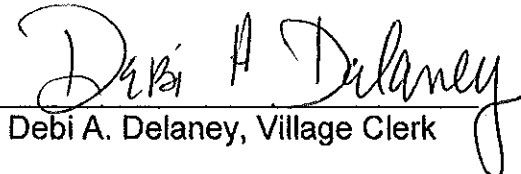
**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Village of Emington joins with other communities, counties, governmental bodies and interested persons and organizations in urging all efforts be made to maintain operation of the Dwight Correctional Center, and that steps be taken to develop a long-term plan for all correctional facilities so that host communities and employees do not need to experience the uncertainty of future potential closures.

**Passed and approved this 14th day of March, 2012 by the Emington Village Board of Trustees, Livingston County, Illinois.**

(seal)

  
Daniel J. Delaney, Sr., Village President

attest:

  
Debi A. Delaney, Village Clerk





## Livingston County Board of Realtors

502 W. HOWARD ST., UNIT 3 • PONTIAC, ILLINOIS 61764  
PHONE: 815-842-4123 • FAX: 815-842-2507 • E-MAIL: lcbn@verizon.net



Wednesday, March 07, 2012



Dear Legislator,

I'm sure you are aware of all of the latest announcements of closing State Facilities. Obviously, the one that will affect us the most is in Dwight, Illinois, with the Women's Correctional Facility.

The impact of just the announcement in the community is unbelievable. Some families have as many as four family members working there. They have children in school, own homes, and even have elderly parents or grandparents they help take care of.

I know that the State of Illinois is in serious financial shape, and this is not good. I also know that there are some in Springfield that want the prison employees to take a cut in their own pensions. I think the Unions have taken some concessions lately, and this is what they get, an announcement that their prison is closing. There are many ways this state can make cuts without cutting all of these jobs. From some of the numbers we have seen so far, it looks like it will cost the State to add on, update and move these prisoners elsewhere. It sounds exactly like when they were going to close Pontiac. The cost to move these prisoners and the financial burden to the local community will never be recouped. Many people will have to put their homes up for sale, and because of the current economy, we will have no buyers.

At a time when we are trying to get businesses to come to Illinois, why are we announcing closing facilities and putting people out of jobs. We need to get our financial situation in order, and that means elected officials taking their share of cuts as well. We also need to stop giving millions to just the big companies that threaten to leave our State.

We are asking all of you to take a second look at the places on the list to close, and really think about long term impact. The worse the economy gets, the higher the crime rate, so how can we even think of closing these already over crowded facilities. Not only will closing Dwight Prison impact Dwight, but all of the surrounding counties as well.

Sincerely,

Joan Bullard, President  
Livingston County Board of Realtors

**G. Michael Ingles**  
416 W. Henry St.  
Pontiac, IL 61764-2418

March 12, 2012

Senator Michael Frerichs  
45 E. Universtiy Ave., Ste 206  
Champaign, IL 61820

Dear Senator Frerichs,

I am writing to you as a member of the Illinois General Assembly and the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (GOGFA). As you are well aware, Gov. Quinn has proposed closure of the Dwight Correctional Center as part of his budget. As a local elected official for more than 30 years, I understand the need to reduce expenditures to begin to solve the dire situation the State of Illinois is in. Hopefully, you and your colleagues will find ways to get to a balanced budget without the risks this proposal would bring.

I am sure you can understand the devastating effects that closing Dwight would have on not only Dwight, but the area for many miles around. Jobs lost, drastically reduced retail spending, housing value declines, erosion of property values producing real estate taxes to local entities including our schools are certain. I appreciate and support the concept of "sharing the pain" when reductions are necessary, but this would amount to nothing more than "passing the pain down".

Even more of a concern is the risk to public safety. Relocating residents to other facilities not designed for their classifications is a real risk to those communities and the employees at those facilities. And I have yet had anyone to explain how an overcrowded system can reduce capacity and continue to operate. As a resident of Pontiac, I think I understand such things where a maximum security institution is involved.

The closure of Pontiac was proposed by then Gov. Ryan when I was Mayor, and more recently by then Gov. Blagojevich. In both cases, the proposal was rescinded; hopefully this will happen again, based on legislative input to the budget process.

Thanks for your dedicated service to the residents of Illinois and for your careful consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

G. Michael Ingles

Cc: Dwight Mayor Bill Wilkey  
Senator Shane Cultra  
Representative Jason Barickman

To whom it may concern,

My name is Jennifer Gura and I live in Streator, Illinois where there are 44 Streatorites working at Dwight Correctional Center. I am simply a concerned citizen who did not feel I could sit by without giving an opinion on the facilities closure.

This area is already economically struggling and this would simply be devastating to several communities.

What needs to happen in Illinois is the public aid/welfare system needs to be looked at very carefully and modified. I am not only complaining I also offer solutions. I am a regular writing to the governor/senator with concerns and always offer solutions. I am not an individual that is quick to blame government for all the problems but I truly feel a lot goes on that they are not aware of.

I myself work two jobs just to live comfortably and that is indeed my choice, but the other day while standing in line at the Walgreens in Streator my face was on fire with anger when I witnessed the customer in front of me purchase a basket full of Easter candy and a pack of Cigarettes on the LINK card. What? I asked myself why did they not have to pull out cash for smokes? So I asked the clerk and she explained to me that people have "CASH ASSISTANCE" on the link card and it allows them to buy cigarettes. HUH? How could this happen? First of all candy, monster drinks, along with about a hundred other things should not be allowed on LINK. That would save us 2 million dollars a year right off the bat. Give people meat, dairy, fruit vegetables, period! Teach them to actually shop for food to make a meal not snacks.

The other issue I have is everyone along with their brother sister and cousin getting pain pills on a public aid card. If people were told they had 3 refills left and they would have to find an alternative such as a pain clinic teaching them to deal with their pain that would probably cut spending by about 10 million dollars!!!! People do not need to be on pain prescriptions for the rest of their life when they are 18 or 20 or even 30 years old. Most of them pick up the vicodin prescription on Friday and sell half of them through the weekend and make a couple hundred bucks on the free pills that myself and the employees of the Dwight Correctional Center are paying for.

There are so many things that need to be revamped in this state that are not even being addressed that it is upsetting to hear them say we have to close a prison because basically the state is broke. Don't punish the working people and leave them unemployed. Punish the people already taking advantage of us on a daily basis.

Thank you in advance,

Jennifer Gura  
1204 E Main Street  
Streator, Il. 61364

Livingston County Democratic Central Committee  
Joe Ruddy, Chairman  
905 E. Chestnut St.  
Pontiac, IL. 61764

March 6, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
Senator Jeffrey Schoenberg, Representative Patricia Bellock, Co-Chairs  
703 Stratton Office Building  
Springfield, IL. 62706

Dear Senator Schoenberg and Representative Bellock:

I am writing in support of maintaining the operation of the Dwight Correctional Center. The undersigned members of the Livingston County Democratic Central Committee and the Democratic Party in Livingston County and the surrounding area join me in this support and in expressing their agreement with the factors in support of the facility.

The Dwight Correctional Center is the long-standing female maximum security facility in the State of Illinois. As such, the Center has been operated by the Illinois Department of Corrections for the sole purpose of providing the specialized services that are needed by the female inmate population. Included in this array of programs are the female reception and classification unit for the entire state, specialized medical services for the female population, programs for parenting and child services, the female in-patient mental health and psychiatric unit, and most importantly staff members including correctional officers, administrative officers, and program personnel who have the specialized training and extensive experience essential to provide services to meet these needs. One of the hidden costs of closing the facility that is not being considered is the need to retrain employees. The needs of the inmate population certainly will not decrease if inmates are moved. There may be additional legal costs as well if the needs are not met or met with reduced efforts and expertise as perceived by the inmates and various prison watch-dog groups.

Another reason not to close the facility is the economic impact that the closure will have on the area. The Village of Dwight and all of the surrounding communities in Livingston, Kankakee, Grundy, LaSalle, Ford and Will counties will suffer significant economic losses including loss of jobs, loss of sales of good and services, decreased housing values, and related losses across all sectors of the economy. The loss to the Village of Dwight alone will be astronomical and this loss will spread acute and particular devastation across Livingston County. This area is primarily rural and the correctional center has long been a valuable resource of jobs and professional careers for many. The Greater Livingston County Economic Development Council has estimated that the closure will cost the region \$45 million. The Council estimates further that for every one of the 350 jobs lost at the prison slightly more than one other job will be lost in other areas of the

PLEASE KEEP THE PIGEON OPEN

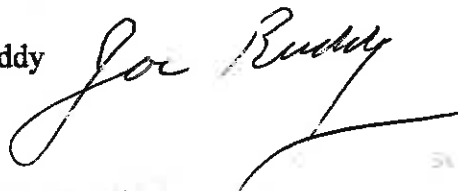
Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
 Senator Schoenberg, Representative Bellock, Co-Chairs  
 March 6, 2012  
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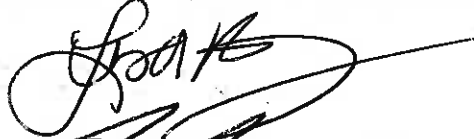
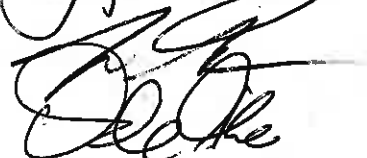


local economy. The Council estimates that the additional job loss could result in another 375 workers. Again, the economic impact in the region will be astronomical and catastrophic. The loss will ripple into the economy and ensure that the region will be unable to recover for years, certainly not in the foreseeable future.

Please consider all of the facts as you conduct hearings and hold deliberations for the recommendation of the Commission.

Thank you for taking the time and effort to complete this difficult task. Your work is much appreciated by the citizens of our State.

Sincerely,

Joe Ruddy 

Name (Please Print)	Signature	Address
Lisei Heberg		103 Elm Portne
Jeremy Michels		222 Lyon St.
Dale Hoke		106 E. Second, Odell, IL.
Lori McConner	Lori McConner	303E SOUTH ST. Dwight, IL.
SHARON WALL	Sharon Wall	704 E High Odell, IL.
Jim Reholz		604 E High Odell IL
Owen J. Lyons STEVE HARTZELL	OWEN J. LYONS Steve Hartzell	RR#2 Portne 803 KATHRYN PORTNE, IL
Robert SHORES	Robert Shores	1107 N. PLUM
DALE E POPP	Dale E Popp	314 E PAYSAN
Robert Verdun	Robert Verdun	701 Lawrence Portne



NAME	PRINT	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS
Mary A. Ruddy		Mary A. Ruddy	905 E. Chestnut
Earl A. Riotts		Earl A. Riotts	206 Gori Street
DOUG JONES		Doug Jones	907 E. Chestnut
Michele Jones		Michele Jones	907 E Chestnut
RE HINEGARDNER		Robert E. Hinegardner	906 E Chestnut St.
Dorothy L. Hinegardner		Dorothy L. Hinegardner	906 E Chestnut St.
Gerald Shepard		Gerald Shepard	914 Indiana Ave. Pontiac
MARILYN SHEPARD		Marilyn Shepard	914 Indiana Ave Pontiac
RICK L. CAMPBELL		Rick Campbell	220 W. Bennett Pontiac, MI
PATRICIA LYONS		Patricia Lyons	17864 E 1700 North Rd Pontiac 61764
Janet Hogan		Janet Hogan	1105 Bailey Dr Pontiac 61764
Henry Hogan		Henry Hogan	1105 Bailey Dr 61764
Ann Legner		ANN LEGNER	732 W. Reynolds 61764
Mary Helen McCorvie		Mary Helen McCorvie	809 N. Main, Pontiac 61764
JAMES O. ANDERSON		James O. Anderson	1108 N BAILEY, DR., PONTI.
Steve Worthington		Steve Worthington	215W Prairie St Pontiac 61764
Rich Harlan		Rich Harlan	<del>215W</del> E 1700 N RD Flomgon
Rob Miller		Rob Miller	605 Lawrence Way Pontiac
TERRY SANBERS		Terry Sanders	109 W. MAPLE
Shannon Folk		Shannon Folk	321 Wabash Ave.
JAMES E. DEMOPOULOS		Jim Demopoulos	371 WABASH AVE PONTIAC
Erin Grammer		Erin Grammer	212 W 4th St Pontiac, MI
GLADYS CROFT		Gladys Croft	707 S Locust St.
Steve CROFT		Steve Croft	707 S Locust St.
Katie Croft		Katie Croft	1304 Trainor Dr. Apt A
Jaime Davis		Jaime Davis	820 MOHAVE DR NE. PONTIAC, MI
TRACEY NODINE		Tracey Nodine	820 MOHAVE DRIVE PONTIAC, MI

*PLEASE SAVE DWIGHT CORRECTIONAL CENTER*

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03-06-12

WE ARE IMPLORING YOU TO KEEP DWIGHT CORRECTIONAL CENTER  
OPEN!

DCC IS ALREADY A MAXIMUM SECURITY FACILITY. IT MAKES NO SENSE  
TO SPEND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS TO REHAB  
ANOTHER NON FUNCTIONAL/SECURE FACILITY. OUR VILLAGE OF  
DWIGHT NEEDS THIS CORRECTIONAL CENTER FOR SURVIVAL. CLOSING  
THIS FACILITY WOULD IMPACT HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE, STATE  
EMPLOYEES AND VILLAGE BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYEES.

RESPECTFULLY,

  
VICKI HEINRICH RYAN

115 ORCHARD RD.

DWIGHT, IL 60420

TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON  
15TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS



AGRICULTURE  
CHAIRMAN, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, RESEARCH,  
BIOTECHNOLOGY, AND FOREIGN AGRICULTURE  
DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS OF  
OVERSIGHT AND CREDIT  
TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC  
BUILDINGS, AND EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT  
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT  
WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-1315

- REPLY TO:  
WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
 1207 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-2371
- DISTRICT OFFICES:  
 2004 FOX DRIVE  
CHAMPAIGN, IL 61820  
(217) 403-4690  
 202 NORTH PROSPECT ROAD  
SUITE 203  
BLOOMINGTON, IL 61704  
(309) 663-7049  
 655 WEST LINCOLN  
UNIT 8  
CHARLESTON, IL 61920  
(217) 348-6759  
 1001 MARKET STREET  
SUITE 102  
MOUNT CARMEL, IL 62863  
(618) 262-8719

April 1, 2012

Senator Jeff Schoenberg  
Representative Patricia Bellock  
Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
703 Stratton Office Building  
Springfield, IL. 62706

Dear Colleagues,

I write to add my name to the thousands of citizens objecting to the possible closure of the Dwight Correctional Center.

The people of Livingston County would be devastated by this decision. This largely rural county has suffered enough already in the economic downturn of recent years, compounded by natural disasters that have afflicted this region.

The loss of more than 350 jobs, mostly affecting people in Livingston County, cannot be underestimated. The ripple effect would be astounding.

Having represented this county in Congress for the last 11 years, I care deeply for the futures of hardworking men and women. Please don't close Dwight.

Warmest Regards,

Timothy V. Johnson  
Member of Congress





March 27, 2012

Senator Jeffrey Schoenberg  
Representative Patricia Bellock  
Co-Chairs  
Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
703 Stratton Office Building  
Springfield, IL 62706

Re: Written Testimony- Closure of Dwight Correctional Center

Dear Senator Schoenberg and Representative Bellock,

Please accept this communication as my submission of written testimony on the above referenced closure which will be heard by the Commission on April 4, 2012. The proposed closure of Dwight Correctional Center is of great concern to Laborers' International Union of North America, Local 2002, Illinois State Employees Association and the Union members, employees at the facility who will be laid off or transferred.

It is on behalf of all of the affected employees at Dwight Correctional Center that we urge this Commission **not** to support the closure of this facility. Dwight currently houses female inmates in a maximum security level facility. The inmates at Dwight are those that create a serious safety issue to the employees and inmates at the other two (2) female correctional facilities. Dwight is a place to send the most serious of female offenders. Besides that, there are only three (3) female institutions in total. According to Department of Corrections' plan, they intend to move the female inmate population from Dwight and put them in Logan Correctional Center, currently a male institution and move the male population to Lincoln Correctional Center. However, Lincoln currently houses female inmates which would mean that the females currently at Lincoln would all have to be relocated between Logan and Decatur Correctional Center. The entire female inmate population, approximately 2700, in the State would be divided between two institutions. This is terribly problematic. Furthermore, Lincoln Correctional Center cannot house all of the

inmates from Logan Correctional Center which means the overabundance would have to be distributed amongst the other already overpopulated male facilities.

In addition to the reasons stated above, staff at Logan Correctional Center, which is currently housing male inmates, would have to go through a series of training as the training for male facilities and female facilities is extensively different. There is also the additional cost to Logan which is not now equipped to house female offenders. Logan's budget would need to increase substantially to accommodate the incoming female population.

Furthermore, Dwight Correctional Center has a large medical center, hospice and a mental health facility to service the large population of female inmates. They also have staff and training in place for those offerings. The same is not true at Logan Correctional Center. Logan does not have hospice or a mental health facility and does not have contracts in place and staff to deal with the issues of hospice and mental health.

By closing Dwight Correctional Center, the Agency will now only have two facilities between which they can transfer female inmates. Currently, when a problem arises with a female inmate they are immediately transferred to another female institution. If the female inmate is involved in a problem at that institution there is currently a third option. In addition, for all female inmates there is the threat of going to Dwight, the only maximum security facility for female inmates. Like Tamms Correctional Center, Dwight is often used as a deterrent for female inmates who would likely otherwise create safety issues but for the threat of a maximum security setting.

Dwight Correctional Center is vital to the employees across the State whose daily safety is at risk, especially with options- only two female institutions- are so limited. It is imperative that this Commission think first of the safety of the employees and the inmates across the State of Illinois. We implore you on behalf of the employees across the State not to support the closure of Dwight Correctional Center.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Ruiz" with a small "KSS" written below the name.

Steve Ruiz  
President, LIUNA, Local 2002, ISEA

*Cc: COGFA Members and Dan Long, Executive Director, COGFA*



April 4, 2012

Mr. Kevin McNamara  
Dwight Village Administrator  
Via email [kmcn@dwightillinois.com](mailto:kmcn@dwightillinois.com)

Dear Mr. McNamara,

I am writing this letter in support of Dwight Correctional Center remaining open. Morris Hospital provides obstetrical services for the Dwight prison population. In 2011, Morris Hospital provided services for 30 obstetrical patients. The loss of this business would have a significant impact on Morris Hospital and the hospital would have to look for opportunities to reduce expenses to offset this loss in revenue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Steadham", written in a cursive style.

Mark Steadham  
President & CEO



# ECONOMIC ALLIANCE OF KANKAKEE COUNTY

200 East Court Street, Suite 507, Kankakee, IL 60901

Phone: (815) 935-1177 Fax: (815) 935-1181

www.kankakeecountyed.org

**MICHAEL J. VAN MILL, AICP**  
President / CEO

## A RESOLUTION BY THE ECONOMIC ALLIANCE OF KANKAKEE COUNTY SUPPORTING THE CONTINUATION OF THE OPERATION OF THE DWIGHT CORRECTIONAL CENTER

**WHEREAS**, Governor Quinn and the Illinois Department of Corrections have announced the closure of the Dwight Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois; and

**WHEREAS**, the Dwight Correctional Center has been an integral part of the Illinois Correction System for over 80 years; and

**WHEREAS**, the Illinois Correctional System is extremely over capacity, resulting in unsafe conditions, and the closure of Dwight Correctional Center does nothing to reduce this overcrowding; and

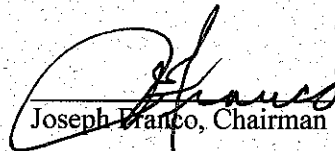
**WHEREAS**, the Dwight Correctional Center is an integral part of Kankakee County's economy by providing over 78 direct jobs and the purchase of goods and services from numerous area businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, the closure of Dwight Correctional Center would have a significant impact on hundreds of employees and their families, relocation away from their home communities or loss of employment, creating a destructive effect on their families and their future; and

**WHEREAS**, the financial impact on area counties, municipalities, schools and other valuable institutions would be devastating,

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Economic Alliance of Kankakee County joins with other communities, counties, governmental bodies and interested persons and organizations in urging all efforts be made to maintain operation of the Dwight Correctional Center, and that steps be taken to develop a long-term plan for all correctional facilities so that host communities and employees do not need to experience the uncertainty of future potential closures.

**Passed and approved this 12th day of April, 2012 by the Economic Alliance of Kankakee County.**

  
Joseph Franco, Chairman

attest:

  
Cherrie McBride, Secretary

  
Regina M. O'Neill, Notary Public

(seal)

**OFFICIAL SEAL**  
**REGINA M O'NEILL**  
**NOTARY PUBLIC, STATE OF ILLINOIS**  
**MY COMMISSION EXPIRES 9/22/2012**

I hope that the closing of Dwight Maximum Security Women's Prison is stopped. It does not help our budget in anyway by transferring Maximum security women inmates to a men's prison and then transferring the men to another prison and then transferring medium security women prisoners with maximum security women. It is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers, and communities. It is also expensive to transfer prisoners and convert prisons. I am not sure what Governor Quinn is trying to accomplish here, but it is reckless and dangerous for many reasons. It disrupts lives and communities, and certainly gives the State of Illinois a bad name as far as making sound financial decisions. The costs involved with the relocations of prisoners, correctional officers, families, and the changing of prisons from men's to women's is financially irresponsible. The effect on the communities is devastating. We can balance our budget by curtailing the spending in all areas. Stop raising the salaries and pensions of our senators and representatives first. They only need one office. Stop all perks. Our representatives need to show that they care about Illinois by taking pension and salary cuts first. They seem to be attacking the disabled, and our most vulnerable first. Step up and lead Illinois in a responsible manner. Our last two governors have gone to prison, and that is why we are in the budget situation we are today. Our politicians have to take responsibility for this. We need to keep jobs in Illinois. We need to make Illinois a safe and prosperous place to live, and releasing prisoners is not the answer, especially maximum and medium security prisoners. Dwight is the only Maximum Security Prison in Illinois. Transferring these prisoners and putting them in with medium security prisoners seems to violate the rights of these women to be treated safely. Lawsuits will soon follow. Please stop these foolish and dangerous closings, before the State of Illinois is hurt further financially.

Donald Litteken

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I hope that the closing of Dwight Maximum Security Women's Prison is stopped. It does not help our budget in anyway by transferring Maximum security women inmates to a men's prison and then transferring the men to another prison and then transferring medium security women prisoners with maximum security women. It is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers, and communities. It is also expensive to transfer prisoners and convert prisons. I am not sure what Governor Quinn is trying to accomplish here, but it is reckless and dangerous for many reasons. It disrupts lives and communities, and certainly gives the State of Illinois a bad name as far as making sound financial decisions. The costs involved with the relocations of prisoners, correctional officers, families, and the changing of prisons from men's to women's is financially irresponsible. The effect on the communities is devastating. We can balance our budget by curtailing the spending in all areas. Stop raising the salaries and pensions of our senators and representatives first. They only need one office. Stop all perks. Our representatives need to show that they care about Illinois by taking pension and salary cuts first. They seem to be attacking the disabled, and our most vulnerable first. Step up and lead Illinois in a responsible manner. Our last two governors have gone to prison, and that is why we are in the budget situation we are today. Our politicians have to take responsibility for this. We need to keep jobs in Illinois. We need to make Illinois a safe and prosperous place to live, and releasing prisoners is not the answer, especially maximum and medium security prisoners. Dwight is the only Maximum Security Prison in Illinois.

Transferring these prisoners and putting them in with medium security prisoners seems to violate the rights of these women to be treated safely. Lawsuits will soon follow. Please stop these foolish and dangerous closings, before the State of Illinois is hurt further financially. Governor Quinn's fiscal policies are wrecking the state by blackmailing communities and threatening to close their facilities that, in the end knows he can't close because they will devastate the people, community, and State of Illinois financially. The State of Illinois has a name for corrupt politicians since the last two governors are currently in prison. Please work together to stop this financial corruption, ensure the safety of the citizens by supporting our prisons, keep jobs in Illinois. The Illinois Corrections system is designed to house 33,000 inmates, It is currently housing close to 48,000. We cannot close the only maximum security women's prison in Illinois. The safety of the prisoners, correctional officers, and communities will be put in danger. Also all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there and they're either kept in Dwight or sent to other prisons around the state. Keeping Dwight Correctional Center open is the correct financially sound decision to make.

Jennifer Litteken

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being.

Alicia Litteken

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies and close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being.

Erica Litteken

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I am in favor of Dwight Correctional Center remaining open.

Since Dwight serves as the only maximum security women's facility, its continued operation is vital to the Illinois Corrections System. Closing Dwight and transferring the inmates to other facilities which are either already overcrowded or need to be retro-fitted to meet the women's needs makes no sense. Moving so many inmates around is not cost effective, nor good for the safety of corrections staff and the inmates.

Approximately 60% of Dwight's population comes from the Chicago/Cook County metropolitan area. Those women could be denied the support of family and friends who will find it difficult to travel farther to visit the inmates. In addition, since Dwight serves as the writ facility, it will cost more in transportation and human resources to safely transport the inmates when court appearances are necessary. Dwight fulfills many other functions such as a mental health facility, hospital, vocational training, as well as the service dog training program. It would be hard to duplicate the same services in



another facility. Training new staff to provide the services is inefficient and will only add to the cost of the closure.

Illinois needs every job available both in the public and private sector. Each is dependent on the other. Rank and file employees pay taxes, support local businesses, and help make our neighborhoods stable and safe communities. Without the jobs Dwight provides many other jobs in the private sector will be lost due to the ripple effect of layoffs. Punishing the citizens of Illinois in such a manner is not the answer to reducing Illinois expenditures. Tax revenue generated by both these public and private sector jobs would diminish putting an increased burden on others.

There must be other means to reduce Illinois expenditures and increase revenue. All elected officials need to lead by example. Eliminate pay raises for Illinois Constitutional Officers, department directors, cabinet positions, and members of executive commissions and boards. If pay cuts are necessary, then make the cuts. Reform the pension benefits of elected officials. A one person-one pension policy is reasonable with a higher standard set before an individual is eligible for a pension. Better yet, stop pensions for elected officials since holding elected office is not meant to be a lifetime endeavor. Close corporate tax loopholes.

It is time for Illinois elected officials to act responsibly. We need to keep jobs in Illinois. We need to keep Dwight Correctional Center open and fully operational.

Donna Boeckmann  
Bourbonnais, IL 60914

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To Whom It May Concern at COGFA:

I am writing to you in support of the opposition to close Dwight Correctional Center. My husband is a correctional officer at Dwight Correctional Center and takes pride in his job. He works hard to support our three children and myself, as do all of the men and women correctional officers at Dwight. These hard workers do not deserve to lose their jobs, especially during such hard economic times. Dwight Correctional Center is the only female maximum security facility in the state of Illinois, with the only intake and receiving center for all female inmates. Closing Dwight would force the state to spend more money to turn another facility into what Dwight already offers. Many of the female inmates at Dwight are from the Chicagoland area, which would make the commute for their families to visit even longer and more stressful, and the state would again have to spend more money in transfers/transportation to court dates and writs for these inmates if they were to be moved an additional 2hrs south to Lincoln. Not only will the employees and inmates endure unnecessary hardships with the closing of Dwight, but the town, Livingston County, and the surrounding areas will feel the economic impact if Dwight closes. Many businesses in the area may have to close, and many homes could be lost. I am so sick at the thought of how many lives will be negatively effected if Dwight were to close. I urge Governor Quinn to please reconsider his budget and include Dwight and the other facilities slated for closure. Our states

prison system is already overcrowded, and closing more facilities will only add to that, make Illinois more unsafe for everyone. Thank you for allowing me the chance to voice my opinion regarding the Dwight Correctional Center.

Sincerely,

Nicole M. Barr

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Dear Sirs,

This letter is to voice my opposition to the closing of Dwight Correctional Center. Not only will it be an enormous economical burden for Dwight but also for the whole county. I suppose many ideas have been considered, but to arbitrarily close this center is wrong in so many ways. Surely the state can save money in other ways that don't affect the lives of so many people in this county and several others. This seems to be more of a political ploy than anything else. Wouldn't it be better to ask for people to self identify for early retirement state wide, instead of basically firing the officers and guards at Dwight. Many of them have many years of service there and have growing families. Please take all this into consideration before you close this institution. Just my opinion...

Robert M. Leonard  
200 N. Wabash Street  
Odell, Illinois 60460

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it isn't just the impact it will hold for me and long point, it will devastate this area there are no jobs as it is and now if this facility is closed that's a huge loss of jobs and also prisoners being shoved elsewhere and crowded more into a prison how do you people expect anyone to survive ??? economy is bad already and this makes it even worse. I realize money is tight everywhere but at the cost of interrupted lives unemployment will rise greatly with these choices. also another building sitting there to rot there are plenty of empty buildings sitting. is Illinois to die completely due to choices made by out state government without thinking it through totally for next generation. businesses are moving out due to over taxation also. now no jobs no revenue if Dwight prison closes? what is our state government thinking. money problems didn't just appear. they've been there for years. raising taxes and closing facilities is NOT the answer.

Jean Gray

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The closing of Dwight Correctional Center and displacement of over 450 employees and 1000 residents will cast a devastating impact on the residents and community alike. Dwight is two prisons in one. It is not only the Reception and Classification Center for Women but also the only Maximum facility with accommodations for hospital care, mental health, death row and maximum security. All women convicted in Illinois are processed at Dwight. The initial incarceration of the resident will be more costly to the counties admitting the majority of convicted persons with the additional distance. This expense I believe is passed on to the state. The counties will have additional cost for the staff to transport. Court cases continue for not only the criminal cases but also civil court. Multiple writs go out daily for these cases. Now with a move to Logan as proposed, these cases will continue but with additional road time and overtime for staff required to comply with the ongoing court appearances. Logan is a medium security facility. It will have to be altered to facilitate the requirements for women, mental health, maximum security and reception and classification. This will be another additional expense to the state.

The impact on the community and area will be swift and devastating. The loss of revenue of the 450 employees supporting the local businesses, residency in the community and surrounding area, property prices and taxes, loss of services that can no longer be supported due to exodus of residents no longer employed, loss to the educational structure due to the loss of residents are just a few of the obvious impacts of this proposal.

Susan FitzPatrick

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Please do not close the Dwight prison. It is and has been a vital part of that community for years. The consequences of this would be far reaching and would not simply damage the economy of Dwight but it would devastate families in several surrounding counties. I am a registered voter and have been for 28 years.

Debra Caspary  
260 S Maple St  
Clifton IL 60927

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Honorable Representatives:

It's either a myth or a reality that there is a severe shortage of space in Illinois prison. If it is a myth please instruct the Governor and correction officials to provide that data statewide. That data should provide for transparency and scrutiny by the public. If, in fact, our prisons are already overcrowded there is no logical reason to close Dwight Correctional Center or other prisons.

The economic impact of facility closing is both obvious and devastating.

Thank you for your consideration.

Fill Flott  
Member, Livingston County Board  
Dwight, IL

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#### Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

I have lived in Dwight since 1969 and have consistently worked with organizations to better Dwight and improve conditions for the Citizens. My efforts have been through the Dwight Lions Club, Masons, Dwight Village Board and now the Livingston County Board. For the Village I served as Trustee for 8 years and Mayor for 12 years. We are very proud of our Community and have through the Greater Livingston County Economic Development Council tried to improve the economy and provide jobs for our citizens.

If the Dwight Correctional Center closes it would devastate our community. With the present economy we have many homes for sale and there are no buyers. If DCC closes it would not only put Union workers out of work but there are many no-union workers at the facility as well that could not afford to keep their homes. This loss would also effect all our businesses and schools as these people would have to move away where there is a job.

When people asked where I live I tell them Dwight, and they respond isn't that where the Women's Reformatory is and I say yes. We are proud of the facility.

The state is presently spending lots of money on high speed rail. Many of the people that use the train in Dwight are going to and from the DCC.

I understand the Prison system is way over capacity. There must be other areas of state expense that could be reduced rather than further crowding the prisons and placing the employees in harms way.

Thank you for your time and consideration in working through this important decision.

Daryl N. Holt  
311 Linden Street  
Dwight, IL 60420

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Hi, my name is Jessica Chicke and I am opposed to the Dwight closure. I currently am a CMT (state LPN) and a wife and mother of a 12 and 3 year old. I beg of you to support me and my fellow staff and community members to oppose the closure. If I do not have a job, I unfortunately can not afford my home and bills on just 1 salary. Please help us! The hardships that this will cause many surrounding communities and counties is astonishing! Not only will 450+ people lose their jobs, but the town of Dwight will basically be wiped out. Family owned businesses will be lost and families will be uprooted. Many many many other families will be devastated. This is not an economy where jobs are plentiful anymore. I am scared! Scared I will not be able to keep a roof over my children's heads. Scared that I won't be able to feed and cloth my family and scared that I can no longer pay the exorbitant cost to fuel my vehicles. Once again, I, my family and my fellow community members URGE you please support us.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Jessica Chicke

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My Name is Molly Anderson and I am ADAMANTLY opposed to the closure of the Dwight Correctional Center.

I first want to say that I have worked in the health care unit at the Dwight Correctional Center for the past 15 years. I enjoy my work and am privileged to work with some of the most hard working, dedicated and just plain amazing people that you could imagine. We (all 450 of us) do good work. We provide a very necessary service to the community and the state as a whole. That alone should be enough reason to oppose this closure. But the loss of my job and the jobs of my co-workers is only half of my concern.

In addition to working at the Dwight Correctional Center, I have lived in the Dwight area my entire life. I have raised 3 children in this community. The first of these children is currently a Sheriff's Deputy in Livingston County....the second of my children proudly served our country in the United States Marine Corps for 5 years and is now earning a college degree in Law Enforcement and the third of my children is currently a freshman at Dwight Township High School. I have been very involved in some of the many youth programs in our community. I own a home in this town and support local businesses.

Now, you are probably asking yourself what do the personal details of my life have to do with the Dwight Correctional Center closure.....well..... I am no different than any other member of this community. Small towns, like Dwight are different than big cities in that everyone knows everyone. When someone needs help the community reaches out. We support each other and encourage each other. Dwight, like any other small community is really just a great big family. If this prison (as the largest employer in this community) closes, this community will die. It's just that simple. Our town won't just lose the many employees of the prison that will have to move elsewhere to find work (there are no

jobs here). It will lose its infrastructure...businesses will close....home values will drop....tax revenue will decrease...more business will close....police, ems and fire protection will have to be cut....the public schools (already barely getting by) will close....children will have to be bused 30 minutes one way to some other small community (which, by the way, will also be effected by the closure) .....yet more businesses will close.....houses won't sell (who would then want to move here)..... etc. etc. etc. I could go on and on.

I am urging you....please help save.... our community.... our jobs.... our children's opportunity to raise their own children in this kind of environment.....

SAVE OUR WAY OF LIFE !!!!!

KEEP DWIGHT CORRECTIONAL CENTER OPEN !!!!!

Molly Anderson

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My names Is James Boland, I am against the closure of Dwight Correctional Center. The closure of this facility would cause great hardship on not only the 450 employees at Dwight C.C. but also on the town of Dwight the surrounding towns and counties not to mention the hardship on the offenders families.

The trickle effect of employees at Dwight Correctional Center losing their jobs would result in possible loss of homes, having to move families out of surrounding towns, small local family owned buisness's would also suffer , school losing children. I am married and a father of six children, three which still are at home. Both my wife and I are employed at the Dwight prison the closure of Dwight C.C. would would create so much hardship on not only us but also everyone that are touched by the prison being were it is. Dwight is centrally located 2 hours from chicago and 2 hours from springfield, one of the ideals of Dwight is keeping offenders in touch with their children and families. Moving the current population would create a financial hardship on the families having to find ways to get to visits 2 hours further and a loss of visit time, Dwight also has so many programs that would help the offenders upon release, there are church groups, helping paws, dog training, dog grooming, culinary arts, gardening, hospice to mention some, losing Dwight C.C. would mean a loss of programs that will help offenders get jobs. I am asking that you see all the hardship and loss of economy that would be associated with the closure of this fully functional and important prison and what devastating effects would result from its closure.

James Boland  
Correctional Lieutenant

To the COGFA and Elected Officials

My name is Colleen Petree and I am a correctional officer at Dwight Correctional Center. I have been there since 1998. Ever since Governor Quinn announced the proposal to close Dwight CC several things have been running thru my head. The impact it would have on my family could be devastating should it close. I have 4 kids 2 of which are still young. They are 8 and 10. I moved to Dwight in early 1999 so I would be closer to my job. My husband and I bought a house in October 2000. We have just less than 5 years to pay it off. It would be hard to sell our house should we have to move somewhere else just to make a living. My boys go to Dwight grade school and have many friends there. They really like their teachers and are doing really good in school. They participate in many school activities along with scouts. Another thing is that the impact of Dwight prison closing is the economy would go way down and could possibly make Dwight become a ghost town. Businesses would lose income, other people that work at the prison may also end up losing their homes or just have to try to sell their homes and uproot their families just to find jobs elsewhere. Should the prison close how would we sell our houses with the way the economy is now days? How are putting over 450 people out of jobs saving money? There would be more people on unemployment or public aid.

I know for my family we do not want to have to move and leave all our friends and community. I am really scared that if the prison closes that I would either be completely out of a job or have to uproot my family just to have a job. Also my husband works in Ottawa and has been working there for 16 years now. He can't just move to accommodate a job for myself should I get told that I have to go farther south past Pontiac to keep my job as a correctional officer. We need both our incomes to provide for our family and to keep them safe and healthy.

Please take in consideration everything I have stated here and help us keep Dwight Prison open. Don't let the town of Dwight become a ghost town and please don't make us have to uproot our families and leave everything behind that we cherish so much. I keep telling myself to keep my chin up and think positive that everything will work out but some days it is hard to keep tears back just from worrying about my family and how it would change our lives.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely

Colleen Petree

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To whom it may concern:

Don't close the Dwight Prison without a plan to replace the dollars that will be lost to the community. Change will happen and when it happens we want control. The people that are going to get the brunt of the change or aftershock effects of change want that control.

It should not be surprising that people will speak out and say, "Do not close Dwight Prison!"

The families of those who are held at Dwight say "Do not Close the Dwight Prison and make us travel much farther to see their people"

The employees of the Dwight Prison.

The local businesses who provide goods and services

The schools

The Fire and Police Departments say "Don't close the Dwight Prison"

Change will happen. It's How Change Happens, that cause and effect, The current method is devastating to the community and surrounding areas.

If the State has not come up with a responsible plan to replace the loss of jobs, minimize the economic wave of loss, and family disruption it is not time to close the facility. The community has supported the Prison for ages. The State needs to respect the taxpayers and the economic stability that is present. If the Prison needs to be closed make it a five year plan. Retrain the workers. Help bring equal paying positions in a emerging business to the area.

Sandy Erschen  
Pontiac IL 61764

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies and close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need



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Gerald Eversgerd

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March 20, 2012

Commission on Government Finance and Accountability,

I do not believe it is in the best interest of the people of Illinois to close the Dwight Women's Prison. This facility is modern and very well serves the job it was designed to do, incarcerate female prisoners in a safe manner.

If you have never seen this prison I would recommend you take the time to tour it. Not many prisons look like the Dwight facility. From the road you could easily mistake it for a college campus due to the highly visible older style and interesting buildings. Yet behind the facade of buildings there is a modern and efficient facility. I realize you don't retain a facility strictly for its looks, but there is a societal value in not destroying all of our old and unique sites.

There are many very nice homes within sight of this facility with no decrease in their value due to the proximity to a maximum security prison. The prison holds a unique place in that it is not a detriment in any way to the quality of life for the residents nearby. Having driven by other prisons in other areas, I can assure you I would not care to live near them.

Moving the inmates to another sterile overcrowded facility will not reduce the overcrowding of our prison system. While cuts to our State budget are necessary, I would ask you to look deeper into the issues and not just close a long time highly successful facility without adequate planning and forethought.

Thank you,

Eric P. Stewart  
Dwight Resident

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March 15th, 2012

Dear Governor Quinn

My name is Blake Hill and I am a fifth grader at Dwight Grade School in Dwight Illinois. I am writing to you because I think closing the Dwight Prison is a bad idea. There are several reasons why this plan is bad for our town.

If you close down the prison I will have to move because my mom works there and if she loses her job we could end up losing our home. If it got closed people would not have the money to pay their bills.

If people have to move the schools would have fewer students then fewer teachers would work at Dwight schools. That would mean other types of business would close. If other businesses close Dwight Illinois, would become a ghost town.

I think closing the Dwight prison is a bad idea because people would be out of a job so they would no money. I hope you change your mind on closing the Dwight prison and let everyone keep their job. Thank you for reading my letter.

Sincerely

Blake Hill

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Dear Governor Quinn why are you so mean? Why do you want to close the prison and put my mommy out of a job? I don't want to have to move or lose my friends or have to go to a different school. My mommy works at Dwight Correctional center and I have lived in Dwight my whole life. I am 8 years old and don't know why you want to make it where we could lose our house. Please keep Dwight prison open I want to stay where I am now.

Thank you from Daniel Petree.

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I am a retired teacher in the Dwight Community. I have been volunteering at the Dwight Correctional Center for 6 years. I tutor in the Mental Health Department. I have also worked 3 summers with the offenders and their summer day camp with their children. In addition, my teacher's honorary society supports the Aunt Mary's Storybook Program, which helps the offenders connecting with their children through books and tapes of the mother/offender reading a book to her child.

Closing the Dwight Correctional Center would be a disastrous for some of the following reasons:

1. This would economically destroy Dwight and the communities around where staff members live
2. This would create considerable handicaps for family and children of the offenders who want to visit the children's mother.
3. The move could cost most to put into place than money saved by moving offenders to another complex.
4. The effects on the children/families of the staff members moving or their parents out of a job or jobs would cause hardships.
5. The effects of children having a parent in prison is scarring, but to make it nearly impossible to visit the parent is just cruel. Many of the offenders are from the northern and central part of Illinois.
6. Many children of the offenders will be more isolated and continue to keep the cycle going and our prisons filled up family members.

I hope that you will reconsider keeping the Dwight Correctional Center opened.

Thank you

Janice Masching

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Dear Committee Members:

With the possibility of the Dwight Women's Prison being closed, we are writing to request that you do whatever is in your power to stop that from happening. We believe that the closure of the prison would greatly impact the existence of our small town.

In the current economy, homes are difficult to get sold in Dwight. If Dwight loses one of its major employers in the town, home sales will nearly be impossible and property values will further decline. Prison employees will more than likely be uprooted from their homes to find employment elsewhere in the state, whereas, adding to the influx of homes already on the market. If the Governor is trying to eliminate small towns in Illinois, he's certainly on the right track. Maybe in Chicago, the job losses wouldn't make a huge impact, but in our small town that amount of lost wages and tax revenues will cripple us. In closing the prison, Governor Quinn will basically sign for the demise of Dwight.

Location is another important factor. With the prison being the only women's maximum security prison in the state, being in Dwight makes it centrally located for family members to visit the offenders wherever they travel from within the state. Also, what would happen to the buildings and grounds? This would become a nuisance property, never to be sold with the state still paying the expense of maintenance.

The Governor needs to realize that the prison closure doesn't just directly affect the employees or offenders. We are currently renting out a home in Streator to one of the Prison's guards. The guard just transferred to the Dwight Women's Prison from Marion and is now facing the possibility of losing her job. Closing of the prison not only has a huge impact on Dwight as a whole but would also impact our income and we don't even work at the prison!

The effects of the closure would be devastating to the entire Village of Dwight and Livingston County. Please don't let this happen.

Sincerely,

Jerry and Leslie Gingery

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies and close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep

Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being.

Melissa Kuhl

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I hope that the closing of Dwight Maximum Security Women's Prison is stopped. It does not help our budget in anyway by transferring Maximum security women inmates to a men's prison and then transferring the men to another prison and then transferring medium security women prisoners with maximum security women. It is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers, and communities. It is also expensive to transfer prisoners and convert prisons. I am not sure what Governor Quinn is trying to accomplish here, but it is reckless and dangerous for many reasons. It disrupts lives and communities, and certainly gives the State of Illinois a bad name as far as making sound financial decisions. The costs involved with the relocations of prisoners, correctional officers, families, and the changing of prisons from men's to women's is financially irresponsible. The effect on the communities is devastating. We can balance our budget by curtailing the spending in all areas. Stop raising the salaries and pensions of our senators and representatives first. They only need one office. Stop all perks. Our representatives need to show that they care about Illinois by taking pension and salary cuts first. They seem to be attacking the disabled, and our most vulnerable first. Step up and lead Illinois in a responsible manner. Our last two governors have gone to prison, and that is why we are in the budget situation we are today. Our politicians have to take responsibility for this. We need to keep jobs in Illinois. We need to make Illinois a safe and prosperous place to live, and releasing prisoners is not the answer, especially maximum and medium security prisoners. Dwight is the only Maximum Security Prison in Illinois. Transferring these prisoners and putting them in with medium security prisoners seems to violate the rights of these women to be treated safely. Lawsuits will soon follow. Please stop these foolish and dangerous closings, before the State of Illinois is hurt further financially. Governor Quinn's fiscal policies are wrecking the state by blackmailing communities and threatening to close their facilities that, in the end knows he can't close because they will devastate the people, community, and State of Illinois financially. The State of Illinois has a name for corrupt politicians since the last two governors are currently in prison. Please work together to stop this financial corruption, ensure the safety of the citizens by supporting our prisons, keep jobs in Illinois. The Illinois Corrections system is designed to house 33,000 inmates, It is currently housing close to 48,000. We cannot close the only maximum security women's prison in Illinois. The safety of the prisoners, correctional officers, and communities will be put in danger. Also all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there and they're either kept in Dwight or sent to other prisons around the state. Keeping Dwight Correctional Center open is the correct financially sound decision to make.

Autumn Norville

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I am writing in regards to the 14 state agencies that Gov. Quinn is slating to close and lay off over 2000 workers which will effect many businesses and schools. The state of Illinios did not fund the original Dwight CC. It was built by women's groups, who knew that the incarcerated women needed a place of their own. Just as the Chapel at Dwight CC was built and funded by Church Women United. The state has only to maintain it. I have about come to the end of my rope with the disregard that my elected officials have for the Illinois taxpayers. The Chicago Board of Trade was given a \$100,000,000 tax break at the expense of 2000 taxpayers. Sears was given a mega incentive to stay in Illinois. My husband and I moved to Dwight, Illinois in 1979 to live the American Dream and to find more job opportunities. We came from Southern Illinois, where the good jobs were few and far between. We have lived and raised our family in Dwight, a small community with a good school system, which recently has given 14 letters of lay off to employees. Two car dealerships have closed in the last 3 years. One of which my husband worked at. It took my husband (57 yrs old when it closed) over 2.5 years to find a full time job with benefits. RR Donnelly's (printing) is laying off every week with the threat of closing in the next couple of years. Closing Dwight Correctional Center will blow this community off the map. Gas is at \$4.00 a gallon. To find a new job would mean driving and that would mean a move. What on earth is it going to take to stop this horrific budget cut. I voted for the people whom I thought were going to be for what is right and evidently we aren't on the same page. I don't understand "pork" but I understand greasing palms. This whole deal was a feather in cap for the rich and a shaft for the hard working people who are providing public services. I am begging you to put the 14 facilities slated for closure back in the budget and redeem the integrity of your office for which you were elected. Illinois is the 2nd worst state in the Union per the news. I think as an elected official I would work on how to make prisons pay for themselves, get folks off welfare by creating jobs not reducing them and adding more folks on the food stamp lines. I know what it is to have a budget and stay in it. Maybe you could take some budget classes or do like I do and live within my means.

Kathy Kissiar  
210 E. North St  
Dwight, Il. 60420

22 year employee at Dwight CC (vendor health care staff)

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Good afternoon, my name is karon buis and i live in surrounding community and also work at the dwight correctional center. I ask that you please consider voting no to close Dwight CC. I have worked at the prison for 9 years. I love working there educate the women that here is a better way to live their without drugs or alcohol. I believe the closure of the prison would destroy the community and put hundreds of people out of work. Also the women trying to stay connected with their children would not have opportunity to keep that bond because 3 hours south would devastate the family member and create a bigger burden on the familes caring for their children. Lastly I urge you to reconsider the closure because i carry the insurance for my family and my son just started kindergarten where I went to school, if the closure is too continue I am not sure how what we will the housing market would suffer and put more of a strain on an already strained economy. Thank for your time in reading this and your consideration.

Karon buis

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I hope that the closing of Dwight Maximum Security Women's Prison is stopped. It does not help our budget in anyway by transferring Maximum security women inmates to a men's prison and then transferring the men to another prison and then transferring medium security women prisoners with maximum security women. It is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers, and communities. It is also expensive to transfer prisoners and convert prisons. I am not sure what Governor Quinn is trying to accomplish here, but it is reckless and dangerous for many reasons. It disrupts lives and communities, and certainly gives the State of Illinois a bad name as far as making sound financial decisions. The costs involved with the relocations of prisoners, correctional officers, families, and the changing of prisons from men's to women's is financially irresponsible. The effect on the communities is devastating. We can balance our budget by curtailing the spending in all areas. Stop raising the salaries and pensions of our senators and representatives first. They only need one office. Stop all perks. Our representatives need to show that they care about Illinois by taking pension and salary cuts first. They seem to be attacking the disabled, and our most vulnerable first. Step up and lead Illinois in a responsible manner. Our last two governors have gone to prison, and that is why we are in the budget situation we are today. Our politicians have to take responsibility for this. We need to keep jobs in Illinois. We need to make Illinois a safe and prosperous place to live, and releasing prisoners is not the answer, especially maximum and medium security prisoners. Dwight is the only Maximum Security Prison in Illinois. Transferring these prisoners and putting them in with medium security prisoners seems to violate the rights of these women to be treated safely. Lawsuits will soon follow. Please stop these foolish and dangerous closings, before the State of Illinois is hurt further financially.

Christine Faas

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Hello, my name is Brenda Fieldman Benzik. I am opposed to the closing of Dwight Correctional Center!!! I am writing this letter but plan to attend the meeting on 4-4 at Dwight High School. I am quite passionate about this subject but feel I can explain my position better with the written form of a letter.

I am a retired correctional counselor. I worked at Dwight Correctional Center for 21 1/2 years and just retired this past December. I am also a concerned Dwight resident that feels the closing of the institution will severely impact the businesses in this town. This includes every place where food is served, gas is purchased, and other goods and services are sold. I am also married to a teacher at Dwight High School. The attendance at the school is less than it has been his entire career, and the closing would negatively impact this also. They are downsizing the school system already since the state is not paying the bills now. I am the 4th generation of my family and my children grew up here. I do not want to move from here, and I want the town to thrive due to my family history. I am also a home owner and tax payer. I know that the tax base will be hurt if the institution closes, and at this time I have inherited another house. My plan was to rent one of these houses to a Correctional Officer but at this time, this plan is on hold. My fear is that if the institution closes, I will have 2 houses to pay taxes on and no renter to help pay for the extra property taxes

That was my introduction. My concerns are as follows:

Because I was a counselor at the institution, I am aware of the programs they have because it is the only female maximum security institution in Illinois. Dwight was the only female institution until the late 80's. Because of this fact, it has all of the services that the females needed. Dwight has some functions that no other institutions have. They include the Wells Dual Diagnosis Substance Abuse Treatment Program, and the counselor that deals with contacting the family member that will take the babies of the pregnant offenders. In order to retrofit any other institution to deal with the population that Dwight has, it will cost a fortune. The other female institutions do not take care of the following populations and another institution will have to deal with the construction of a reception and classification unit, a mental health unit, maximum security unit, segregation unit & a protective custody unit. Special doors have to be installed on some of these units and they have to be separated from the rest of the other populations for safety and security reasons. The programs that are offered at Dwight are in many cases unique to Dwight. They include the college level courses of Restaurant Management, the Beauty School, the Dog Grooming and Dog Training Programs as well as the academic courses. There is the industry that sews clothing used at other facilities, and this is a money generating program. There are the Wells Substance Abuse Treatment programs that have new offenders and more advanced ones as well as the Dual Diagnosis Programs. These offenders have to be segregated from the general population as well. All of this will take new construction to make it happen per the A.D.'s at any other institution.

I am also going to plead my case that the closing of the Tamms facility and this maximum security institution will compromise the safety and security of staff, offenders and the public. If the super max prison is closed and these extremely violent offenders are moved to a maximum security facility, they will be free to do what they had done in the past. They will be running the institutions and not the



wardens, director, or governor. This will generate several expensive lawsuits by staff and offenders due to the lack of proper segregation of these violent offenders.

I read that Dwight was targeted for closure partly due to its location. I submit that this is the main reason Dwight needs to remain open. The offenders are closer to their families here since around 60% of these offenders are from the Chicago area. These offenders do not get many visits as it is and some of them will not see their children unless the Lutheran Social Services Volunteers bring them. These volunteers drive their own vehicles to bring children to Dwight. They can't be expected to drive 6 hours round trip to take these children to visit their mothers at Lincoln with the cost of fuel these days. It is well documented this connection is very important and the children will suffer due to this proposed distance.

The other glaring reason Dwight's proximity to Chicago is very important is the amount of court and medical writs that go to Chicago. If they are 2 hours further south, the cost of the fuel will triple. Offenders now are held at Dwight's Reception and Classification Unit if they have a writ for this very reason and then transferred further south.

In closing, I propose that the institutions the Governor wants to close stay open. I also propose that the Kankakee facility that was recently closed be opened up again but to make it suitable for medium security offenders, put a fence around it. There is also a large area where 1 or 2 more X-houses that hold 450 offenders be built on these grounds. This facility could then house the female offenders that are currently at Lincoln CC. Male offenders can be placed at these beds at Lincoln to help the overcrowding conditions that already exist throughout the state. This area of Illinois needs more jobs and the construction & corrections jobs at Kankakee would help this area's economy also.

Respectfully submitted,  
Brenda Benzik  
Retired Correctional Counselor, Bachelors of Music Education, CADC

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I am a resident of Cornell IL. I have several friends, acquaintances and family who directly rely on this institution as a means of making a living. This planned closure has the entire community and surrounding county in a state of confusion on how to deal with such an act! Please reconsider these actions.

Sincerely

Donald Wallen

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## Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability Members

Our family has lived in Dwight for four generations. My Great grandfather opened the first store in 1854. I am lifelong resident. The closing of the Dwight Correctional Center is very distressing. We were here when it was opened in about 1929. It has been valued member of our community and certainly an important financial asset. It has provided opportunities for employment and advancement, classes (I took my EMT training there, as did many others), and countless other programs that continue today.

In the past 5 years Dwight has lost 2 Auto dealerships and many downtown businesses. The closing of the Correctional Center would be devastating to the local economy and the surrounding area. 350 plus jobs are in jeopardy. Uprooting employees in this economy is not only unrealistic, but creates hardships for their families. Would you want this to happen to you and your family?

With the Correctional Center being the hub for all female inmates for the entire prison system in the state, it seems a closure would cause more expense and confusion. In addition, the entire prison system in Illinois is dangerously overcapacity and under staffed. Closing facilities while overloading others and uprooting employees doesn't make a lot of sense. Shutting a facility such as Dwight must have huge costs. Are they included in the planned savings? Always, the savings are touted. However, in reality it is so much fuzzy math with much of the cost factors left out. This isn't the first time incomplete facts and figures have been used to try to sell a flawed plan.

Respectfully Submitted.

Alex McWilliams

President - Dwight Main Street Program

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability members:

I would like to start off by saying I'm writing to you not just as a correctional officer at Dwight CC, but as a husband and father of 4. I have been at Dwight CC since 1998. I strongly urge you to oppose the closure of Dwight Correctional Center. This closure would be detrimental not only to displaced workers, but the impact it would have on families, businesses, schools, and the overall safety and security of state facilities would be substantial. Dwight CC is very unique. With the state of Illinois' current budget and fiscal issues it can not be replicated. This causes an even greater problem. The loss of programs and services, that have taken years to develop to what they are, would be devastating to the female population. This in turn would directly relate to increased crime rate and safety concerns within our communities. With the already high recidivism rate, these programs and services are a necessity.

Dwight is the only maximum security female prison in Illinois. It is also the only Reception and Classification center for females as well. Dwight CC has a "State of the Art" health care unit with the ability to provide a multitude of services to female offenders, ranging from high risk pregnancy, on grounds dialysis dept, to a residential hospice program for offenders. Dwight CC has two mental health units, one of which deals with specific mental health issues and the other for dual diagnosis mental health and substance abuse. The academic programs available offer the offender everything from pre-GED to college level education. This also includes classes in anger management, career tech, computer tech, lifestyle redirection, parenting, and development of social skills. Dwight CC has a broad spectrum of vocational services available from dog training, dog grooming, industry, commercial cooking, and cosmetology. All of these programs and services are essential to the female population and there preparation for a positive re-entry in to society.

Dwight CC is centrally located within Illinois considering the greater percentage of offenders come from cook county. Cook County Corrections is already over capacity holding female offenders awaiting IDOC placement. The state of Illinois is compensating Cook County Corrections for holding offenders that have already been sentenced to IDOC but have not been placed due to lack of space. If the governors proposed closure of Dwight CC and ATC centers succeeds. We will then be operating at more than 183% over design capacity for female offenders in a system that is already overcrowded. This would create an even greater danger in the workplace for staff and offenders. Dwight's location is optimal for visitation between families and offenders. This is glaringly apparent due to the over 11,000 visits annually. That is also over 40% more than Logan CC and it has over 900 more inmates. Studies show that female offenders who receive a greater number of visits, on average, have a higher parole success rate. With that said, you can understand why the closing of Dwight Correctional Center just doesn't make sense.

The economic impact this closure would cause is astronomical. The amount of money that would be just ripped from the economy in the local areas is well over 60 million dollars. This type of impact would damage communities beyond repair. An array of areas would be devastated from local business, health & social services, transportation, multiple school districts, and not to mention an already low state wide real estate market.

Like I stated in the beginning, I'm not just a correctional officer, but a husband and father of 4 who came to Livingston county 14 years ago to be closer to my employer, to settle down, and start a family. My wife and I purchased a home and began to start a family, in what we felt was a great community, and a stable job. The community has been amazing, but as for the stable job. ....That is still being decided upon, as every year the threat to close prisons, cut pay, and slowly remove benefits and pensions are overwhelming. I have already had to explain to my wife and children that we might have to move far away or even out of state and that their stable structured life just might have to be interrupted. The questions of: When, what about my career, what about our church, what about our friends, and why do we have to move so far from family have already begun. As a husband and father all I can tell them is to be positive and comfort them with "I'm not giving up, we WILL get through this, and we aren't going anywhere".

See it's not all about jobs! It is about families and communities being torn apart. It is about local businesses being affected to the point of closing down after years of service to the community due to loss of patrons that keep them a float. It is about already under funded school districts losing children. It is about people in the community not feeling that since of safety anymore. It is about decades of building communities and services lost.....And all of this due to foolish spending and the misappropriation of funds. So I'm writing to you today to ask .....PLEASE recommend **"NO"** on the closure of Dwight Correctional Center and **"YES"** for Dwight Correctional Center to be placed back in the State Budget. Families and communities depend on it!

**HAND IN HAND UNITED WE STAND!**

Shane D. Long  
Correctional Officer  
14 years @ Dwight CC  
Odell, Illinois

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March 24, 2012

To the Commission on government Forecasting and Accountability:

What? Illinois prisons are overcrowded and understaffed, and Governor Quinn's solution is to close two prisons? This move defies logic, leaves Illinois citizens at risk, and devastates the economy of, not only the local community, but an entire area.

As a forty year Dwight resident, a school teacher, and president of the Dwight Historical Society, I know that the economy has forced Dwight's local government, organizations, schools, and tax payers to cut budgets, examine costs, and make do. The schools have eliminated teachers and cut programs. We

were all getting by until now when Gov. Quinn's plan to close the prison threatens to devastate the community.

While the State sees fit to bank roll big businesses to keep them in Illinois, isn't it a little hypocritical to eliminate the jobs of prison employees? It looks like a classic example of "robbing Peter to pay Paul"—a move that is both inhumane and false economy.

Please do your part to keep the Dwight prison open and find other more logical and less hurtful ways to strengthen the economy of the State of Illinois.

Mary W. Flott

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being.

Lynn Haddad

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I strongly oppose the closing of Dwight Correctional Center, Dwight, Illinois

Oakdale State Reformatory for Women was dedicated November 19, 1931. It was dedicated as a living monument to the Women of Illinois. It was the untiring efforts of the Women's Clubs of Illinois, ably assisted by the women on the Reformatory Board of Advisory. Mrs. John Chadwick of Tuscola, Mrs. John Mason of Aurora, Mrs. William Lewis of Chicago, Mayor Frank Doyle of East St. Louis and Judge Charles G. Briggles of Springfield, Mr. Rodney Brandon were all instrumental in selecting the location, design and organizing of this historic facility. Superintendent of Prisons, Frank D. Whipp at the time stated "This monument for women is equally as important as those erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution and dedicated to the pioneer mothers, located along the National Trails Road, running through twelve states of the Union." He went on to acknowledge the prosperity to Dwight and the efforts of this institution to offer the means of returning unfortunate women to society, clean, healthful and with character reconstruction. These goals continue at Dwight with the programs of Helping PAWS, Industry, behavioral programs, substance abuse treatment, parenting classes, Educational Services at all levels, religious guidance, and more. Incarceration has made great progress in the past years. Closing Dwight and moving the current residents to Southern Illinois will result in several steps backward. Logan Correctional Center was a target for closure last year, now you want to convert it to a Women's facility? The unique well considered design of the open campus at Dwight offers a relaxed and peaceful environment while still offering fair and just discipline. The unique living quarters, and campus like physical layout have deterred any large altercation of residents and staff.

The closing of this facility and displacement of over 450 employees and 1000 residents will cast a devastating impact on the residents and community alike. Dwight is two prisons in one geographical location. It is not only the Reception and Classification Center for Women but also the only Maximum facility with accommodations for a state-of-the-art hospital care, mental health, segregation, and maximum security. All women convicted in Illinois are processed through Dwight. The initial incarceration of the resident will be more costly to the counties admitting the majority of convicted persons with the additional distance. This expense I believe is passed on to the state. The counties will have additional cost for the staff to transport. Court cases continue for not only the criminal cases but also civil court. Multiple writs go out daily for these cases. Now with a move to Logan as proposed, these cases will continue but with additional road time and overtime for staff required to comply with the ongoing court appearances. Logan is a medium security facility. It will have to be altered to facilitate the requirements for women, mental health, maximum security and reception and classification. This will be another additional expense to the state.

How can you put a price on the visits of volunteers, family and children? Dwight has one of the highest visitation rates in the prison system. Families will now have an additional 3-4 hours to make a visit. Will the children services now be required to pick up this bill for transportation and time to facilitate visitation or just stop this contact. These visits are important to the residents. Families will no longer visit as frequently with the additional drive/transportation time. A move to Logan Correctional is an emotional and financial disaster to the residents and their families.

The impact on the community and area will be better defined by the economic impact groups. The loss of revenue of the 450 employees supporting the local businesses, residency in the community and surrounding area, property prices and taxes, loss of services that can no longer be supported due to exodus of residence no longer employed, loss to the educational structure due to the loss of residence are just a few of the obvious impacts of this proposal. We have several employees that are 2nd and 3rd generation employees. Other employees are a family group of 2-4 members working at the facility. This closure will force their move to seek gainful employment. Cascade effects upon the communities in the area and the additional cost to counties is irresponsible politics.

Consider the following:

Employees are 2nd and 3rd generation family service to state

Conversion of a Medium Security MALE prison to Female Maximum and R&C – physical requirements, retraining staff to deal with female needs, camera system, etc

Loss of controllable small groups to large in Dwight environment to dormitory setting

Transportation cost to move Logan males to Lincoln, Lincoln females to Logan, Dwight females to Logan

Additional cost to reimburse mileage to counties for initial incarceration delivery

Additional cost to counties for the transportation time of employees required to go the distance to Logan CC

Additional OT due to distance for the majority of court appearances

Loss of programs currently offered at Dwight for vocational and educational training to use outside

Kankakee Minimum Security Employees AGAIN displaced or layoff, Dwight employees AGAIN threatened by closure in the county, Pontiac employees AGAIN threatened by in county closure.

Additional cost to family services for transport and employees for voluntary or court ordered visitations  
Loss – reduced family support and contact due to distance from family for employees displaced and residents of the prison

450 employees jobs lost – some displaced, forced to move to new jobs, families disrupted or even broken from stress of repeated threats to gainful employment

Cascade effects to community – reduction of:

Community business support of restaurants, service stations, merchants and more

Reduction to tax base – school district. County and city, due to exodus

Vital city services of police, fire and ambulance loose personnel and funding due population and tax reduction

Real estate values plummet

Amtrak discontinues stop

Community churches, adult youth and groups decline due to population reduction

Respectfully Submitted

Vera Fitzpatrick

Life time resident of Dwight, registered voter, Homeowner in Dwight 33 years, Employee of Dwight Correctional Center

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To whom ever it may concern!

Hi my wife is employed at Dwight Correctional Facility and her job is important in helping to support our family and the lifestyle we have built. The loss of her job would not only affect us personally and economically. The area we live in would also suffer from the financial losses that would result from this decision. Other big businesses in the area are already talking about closing their doors and now the state wants to pull out jobs as well, and they think that the town will be just fine. Don't forget the new high speed railway that is going through Dwight and will cut downtown in half. This requires almost as much space as a two lane highway for safety reasons. All this adds up in the end and don't think it is all being looked at. It is all part of the big picture that is DWIGHT ILLINOIS and is forecast over the next few years and the governor who is in charge now won't even be there when all of this happens. I understand the idea of trimming the budget it is something every working tax-payer does in this state to try and pay their bills. When our governing body does crazy things like giving staff members +++ raises, family vacations, and tell state employees that you rarely ever see that they can't have their raises because you can't afford them. If you or your staff members get a raise then all employees down the line should also get their raise. What about tax breaks, you take away some of the breaks blue collar people like me would normally qualify for, and then give big business bigger breaks and even cut their tax amount and they don't even supply jobs in this state. Reading the news in this state any more is just too much to handle, You have your noses in all aspects of our lives that you can get money from and then can't even spend it wisely. Example your state highway repair job support program, makes a few jobs yes but in northern Illinois I have seen no contractors based in this state you awarded state funds to help our economy to out of state workers. From what I have learned some of these contracted workers get discounts on housing, food, and even fuel. The products used in the repairs are rarely purchased here and the said company gets a discount on land to house a temporary site to produce their own. And bring their own workers to operate it. So just how does this support the Illinois economy. They buy some groceries and how does that make the state? Who pays for all of this? Does the government pay for it, of course they do and where do they get it. From the residents of the State of Illinois, We are one



of the highest taxed in all 50 states and this state is still one of the most broke! The amount you tax us and still claim you are broke is crazy. In one aspect of life alone, transportation. I buy a vehicle, tax purchase price, tax shipping (destination fees), tax plates, tax title transfer, tax fuel, tax tires, tax oil changes, I think you get the point anything I do to my vehicles upgrades or to maintain it is taxed. This is only one area that I or we pay taxes. There are many ways tax money is collected and then you raise the amount we are to pay. Now you want to lay off workers who pay those taxes then what raise the rest of us even more? In the past the government trimmed corrections and it only cost more to restaff and retrain lost employees. OH and don't forget the last time you let inmates out on early release. Murders and rapists were accidently released when were not supposed to even have a parole date. The state got sued for the actions they committed right and was that payout in the approved budget? Does anyone besides me see a cycle in this government? They don't seem to learn from their mistakes and we have to pay for them! So here we are again trying to save jobs some fool behind a desk says he does not need when he has how many assistants to do his job and still can't do it right! Before you even start on me no I do not want that job and will not take it! If you run a company and don't make money how long are you in charge when you have no way to save money but cut your work force which makes you the money. There are so many ways to look at this not a solid answer to be found, because all the facts are not being released. What's new there, in politics this is how they bargain to get what they want. We are still the ones who pay for it in the end and may even be losing and they don't seem to care. Many people have posted on how lives will be changed homes or vehicles could or would be lost. Who will pay for all these foreclosed home loans and vehicle repos. A loss of this level in my family would mean a long discussion for moving out of state and away from other family members and friends. This economy is already struggling to survive and I honestly cannot see how this action on your part is going to help fix anything. This may not make sense to you in that big office that I, my wife, and other people with jobs in this state pay for. But I guess that's ok sense you will never read it anyway. If you did read these you would have other options on the table than cutting jobs that hurt people, local, and state economies. A real plan would be in the making with no hidden bargaining to get this state back in the black fiscal zone of operations. IS it so hard to do? I am held responsible for my budget decisions and have to pay restitution for my screw ups. You are in charge of the state budget and are in a big hole that has gotten bigger since you stepped in the office and have yet to explain why this is or even except responsibility for the losses. You helped send your previous boss to jail so you could have the job and yet cannot do any better. Why are you in the office if you will not clean up the mess that dirty politics has created and stop taking everything out on the working class that is paying your salary? I understand this cannot be fixed overnight but I have not seen any progress either. Giving raises on top and cutting jobs on the bottom does not support the fundamentals of good business. If you are going to remove income from an already struggling economy you need a plan to replace it. In all of the plans I have seen form your house the hole only gets deeper, and I for one would like to see some budget progress. It is well past time for a turn around and the politicians are the ones who are supposed to lead this change if they can't then why they are still there. We are supposed to support them and they don't seem to be supporting us, the people who put them in office. Why is this acceptable lying, cheating, stealing, and breaking contracts. This is how you want our children to be raised and try to tell them it is wrong to do. Talk about a moral dilemma how do we fix this if we can't trust the people we elect to hold true to their word and support everyone equally like the job title says. I know this has gotten a little off base but the

governor says the budget he approves is the reason for it, and I do not see where the money will come from to support his proposal. I have stated only some of many reasons that I see around me and I am sure other people see the same and more with questions about the funding. We need to find a solution to fix and maintain the budget for many years to come, not save our butts and hang the next even farther in the hole. Please find a proper solution for this with out possibly killing jobs and towns all a crossed the state. Between all of you in the government you have the knowledge and the power to fix the budget you just need to remember what the job is and get back to it. If you actually read this THANK YOU for YOUR TIME!!!

Thank You

Roger W Petree

Taxpayer and Spouse to an Employee of Department of Corrections

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**Resolution of the  
Livingston County Farm Bureau Board of Directors  
Pontiac, Illinois**

**March 20, 2012**

**Policy Statement:** The members of the Livingston County Farm Bureau Board support the Dwight Prison.

**Explanation:** Closure of the Dwight Prison will negatively impact the economic health and growth of greater Livingston County. The correctional center provides 120 jobs and purchases a significant amount of goods and services from area businesses and organizations. Closing the center would jeopardize not only Dwight, but many surrounding towns and counties. The negative impact to Livingston County's economy will continue to harm remaining residents and business owners.

**WHEREAS:** The Dwight Prison is an integral part of the Livingston County economy, providing 120 jobs and purchasing goods and services from numerous local and regional organizations, including businesses owned by Livingston County Farm Bureau members.

**WHEREAS:** The jobs provided at Dwight Prison pay fair wages and benefits, bringing greater economic stability to area communities where its employees reside.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Livingston County Farm Bureau Board of Directors affirms its opposition to the planned closure of the Dwight Prison and calls for Governor Quinn to stop all plans to close the facility.

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I personally would be affected by the closure of Dwight CC as my husband is an employee there. I have a great career educating high school students in the field of Early Childhood Education. The closure of Dwight would mean a distance separation for our family and/or loss of significant income/career. We have two children and are expecting a third in July. Currently, we are able to financially contribute to our local economy. In addition, I often give freely from my own pocket to help my students in ways that may further their education. However, the closure of the Dwight CC would greatly impact these contributions and in fact we would probably need to depend on the state for financial assistance and/or assistance for medical coverage for our children. Please keep Dwight CC open!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Amy E. Richardson

#### Resolution to Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open

WHEREAS: Dwight Correctional Center is an integral part of the Livingston County economy, providing more than 459 jobs and purchasing goods and services from numerous local businesses; and

WHEREAS: Governor Quinn's proposed closure of Dwight CC would mean a \$40 million loss to the Livingston County economy; and

WHEREAS: Closing Dwight means closing the only female facility in the state with the capacity to house maximum security inmates and the only Reception and Classification Center for female inmates; and

WHEREAS: Closing Dwight, combined with last year's closure of Kankakee MSU and the proposed closure of the Fox Valley ATC, means that the correctional system's capacity to house and rehabilitate female inmates will plummet; and

WHEREAS: Without Dwight CC female correctional facilities would be operating at 183% over their design capacity; and

WHEREAS: Plans to replace Dwight CC by converting Logan Correctional Center to a women's prison would mean less access to programs for inmates and even more overcrowding in male facilities around the state; and

WHEREAS: The majority of Dwight's population is from Cook and the collar counties, which makes it easy for families to visit; and

WHEREAS: Despite being a maximum security facility, Dwight CC has one of the highest visitation rates in the prison system, logging more than 11,000 visits annually; and

WHEREAS: Dwight CC runs vocational programs including Helping Paws to train service dogs and academic and behavioral programs; and

WHEREAS: Dwight CC staff contribute enormously to the life of surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS: Like many communities in the area, Dwight CC employees are the backbone of the Dwight volunteer fire department, which means the community would have to recruit and pay to train their replacements; and

WHEREAS: Closing Dwight CC would require hundreds of employees to move to distant parts of the state—far from their families—or to lose their jobs altogether; and

WHEREAS: The jobs provided at Dwight CC pay fair wages and benefits, bringing greater economic stability to the communities in Livingston County where its employees reside.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That Amy E. Richardson affirms her opposition to the Illinois Department of Corrections' planned closure of the Dwight Correctional Center and calls on Governor Quinn to halt all plans to close the facility; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That Amy E. Richardson calls on the Illinois General Assembly to adopt a budget that maintains full operation of Dwight CC and to take whatever legislative action is needed to ensure that the facility is not closed; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED: That a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Quinn, Senate President John Cullerton, House Speaker Michael Madigan, House Minority Leader Tom Cross, Senate Minority Leader Christine Rodogno and all legislators in the Dwight CC vicinity.

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### **Resolution to Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open**

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WHEREAS: Closing Dwight CC would require hundreds of employees to move to distant parts of the state—far from their families—or to lose their jobs altogether; and

WHEREAS: The jobs provided at Dwight CC pay fair wages and benefits, bringing greater economic stability to the communities in Livingston County where its employees reside.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That **STREATOR ONIZED CREDIT UNION, on behalf of our 80 employees, 15 volunteer Board of Directors, and over 20,000 members**, affirms its opposition to the Illinois Department of Corrections' planned closure of the Dwight Correctional Center and calls on Governor Quinn to halt all plans to close the facility; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That **STREATOR ONIZED CREDIT UNION, on behalf of our 80 employees, 15 volunteer Board of Directors, and over 20,000 members**, calls on the Illinois General Assembly to adopt a budget that maintains full operation of Dwight CC and to take whatever legislative action is needed to ensure that the facility is not closed; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED: That a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Quinn, Senate President John Cullerton, House Speaker Michael Madigan, House Minority Leader Tom Cross, Senate Minority Leader Christine Rodogno and all legislators in the Dwight CC vicinity.

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## **Dwight, Illinois Prison**

### **Resolution of the Livingston County Farm Bureau Board of Directors Pontiac, Illinois**

**March 20, 2012**

**Policy Statement:** The members of the Livingston County Farm Bureau Board support the Dwight Prison.

**Explanation:** Closure of the Dwight Prison will negatively impact the economic health and growth of greater Livingston County. The correctional center provides 120 jobs and purchases a significant amount of goods and services from area businesses and organizations. Closing the center would jeopardize not only Dwight, but many surrounding towns and counties. The negative impact to Livingston County's economy will continue to harm remaining residents and business owners.

**WHEREAS:** The Dwight Prison is an integral part of the Livingston County economy, providing 120 jobs and purchasing goods and services from numerous local and regional organizations, including businesses owned by Livingston County Farm Bureau members.

**WHEREAS:** The jobs provided at Dwight Prison pay fair wages and benefits, bringing greater economic stability to area communities where its employees reside.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Livingston County Farm Bureau Board of Directors affirms its opposition to the planned closure of the Dwight Prison and calls for Governor Quinn to stop all plans to close the facility.

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A SHORT NOTE TO EXPRESS MY OPPOSITION TO THE CLOSING OF DWIGHT CORRECTIONAL CENTER – I HAVE SEEN FIRSTHAND THE KIND OF ECONOMIC DISASTER THAT THE THREAT OF SUCH A CLOSURE CAN BRING. WHEN WE HERE IN PONTIAC WERE TARGETED THE BUSINESS CLIMATE OF OUR TOWN BECAME VERY SOUR OVERNIGHT. LIVINGSTON COUNTY CAN ILL AFFORD TO LOSE ANY EMPLOYER, LET ALONE ONE OF THIS MAGNITUDE. I URGE YOU TO CONSIDER ALL THE FACTS BEFORE YOU ISSUE A DEATH SENTENCE TO THE TOWN OF DWIGHT AND HER SURROUNDING SISTER CITIES!

RESPECTFULLY,  
MARK JOHNSON, SALES MANAGER  
LYNN CHEVROLET BUICK  
PONTIAC, IL.

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#### Resolution to Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open

WHEREAS: Dwight Correctional Center is an integral part of the Livingston County economy, providing more than 459 jobs and purchasing goods and services from numerous local businesses; and

WHEREAS: Governor Quinn's proposed closure of Dwight CC would mean a \$40 million loss to the Livingston County economy; and

WHEREAS: Closing Dwight means closing the only female facility in the state with the capacity to house maximum security inmates and the only Reception and Classification Center for female inmates; and

WHEREAS: Closing Dwight, combined with last year's closure of Kankakee MSU and the proposed closure of the Fox Valley ATC, means that the correctional system's capacity to house and rehabilitate female inmates will plummet; and

WHEREAS: Without Dwight CC female correctional facilities would be operating at 183% over their design capacity; and

WHEREAS: Plans to replace Dwight CC by converting Logan Correctional Center to a women's prison would mean less access to programs for inmates and even more overcrowding in male facilities around the state; and

WHEREAS: The majority of Dwight's population is from Cook and the collar counties, which makes it easy for families to visit; and

WHEREAS: Despite being a maximum security facility, Dwight CC has one of the highest visitation rates in the prison system, logging more than 11,000 visits annually; and

WHEREAS: Dwight CC runs vocational programs including Helping Paws to train service dogs and academic and behavioral programs; and

WHEREAS: Dwight CC staff contribute enormously to the life of surrounding communities; and



WHEREAS: Like many communities in the area, Dwight CC employees are the backbone of the Dwight volunteer fire department, which means the community would have to recruit and pay to train their replacements; and

WHEREAS: Closing Dwight CC would require hundreds of employees to move to distant parts of the state—far from their families—or to lose their jobs altogether; and

WHEREAS: The jobs provided at Dwight CC pay fair wages and benefits, bringing greater economic stability to the communities in Livingston County where its employees reside.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That Michael Hatfield affirms its opposition to the Illinois Department of Corrections' planned closure of the Dwight Correctional Center and calls on Governor Quinn to halt all plans to close the facility; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That Michael Hatfield calls on the Illinois General Assembly to adopt a budget that maintains full operation of Dwight CC and to take whatever legislative action is needed to ensure that the facility is not closed; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED: That a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Quinn, Senate President John Cullerton, House Speaker Michael Madigan, House Minority Leader Tom Cross, Senate Minority Leader Christine Rodogno and all legislators in the Dwight CC vicinity.

Michael Hatfield  
Mathematics Teacher  
Pontiac Twp. High School  
1100 Indiana Ave.  
Pontiac, IL 61764

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I received an email from an official that serves on the COGFA committee. I fully appreciate you taking the time to send a message out to the employees affected by the slated facility closures. I will be attending the COGFA meeting scheduled on April 4th along with any rally, picket or meeting that pertains to the closure of my facility. I have worked for Dwight Correctional Center just shy of 17 years. I have enjoyed every year I have given to the Department of Corrections. I am not a wealthy person but I knew going into my profession that I would never be monetarily rich. I feel that the service I give to the State of Illinois give makes me rich in knowing I am helping impact an offenders life. The programs offered at Dwight do make a difference in the lives of the offenders housed at Dwight Correctional Center. I have always been proud to say I work for the Department of Corrections. I know full well what it is like to live on a budget. I am a mother of four sons and have to keep tight reins on my monthly expenses. My family understands that the State of Illinois is just the same as running a household budget, just on a much larger scale. I also feel that although the Gov. feels the State could save money by closing Dwight and the many other facilities slated for closure this year we need to ask one

question.....how many facilities will we need to close next year and the year after that? I feel that the State will not be any better off during the years to follow the closures these facilities. The money saved will be spent elsewhere and not saved at all. The answer to our budget is not to cause a ripple effect in the communities in which these facilities are placed. The countless business that will be affected by these closures are also necessary to the growth of the economy in Illinois. Perhaps the Gov. should look at other possibilities in saving the State money. DOC employees have given up 6 1/2% worth of annual raises and have had to adjust their personal budgets with the loss of that money. Gov. Quinn, although he has a very important job, has made my annual salary in the three months of this year. The people that I have elected to serve me in government make more in three months than I make annually and then are going to put me out of work to balance their Budget. I find this fact very hard to accept. Like I have said before I will never be a wealthy woman, but I love my job, my home and my community. I urge you to consider the affects closing facilities will have on the hard working dedicated employees of this great State. Perhaps we could look at salary adjustments for the people who are elected to serve the very people they are choosing to put out of work. We all know there are many productive ways to save money without putting people out of work. I watch the news every evening and it seems the rich get richer and the hard working man is forced to work even harder to keep his head above water. I hope that everyone involved in the decision to close these facilities has gone to each and every one of the them and taken a look at the amazing things that are done there for the greater good of the offenders housed in them. I hope that the time has been taken to look into the faces of the countless dedicated employees that will soon be out of work and soon be forced to make decisions that will affect their families forever.

God Bless and may each of you consider the impact this decision will have on so many people.

Shannon Brown  
Dedicated State Employee  
Dwight Correctional Center

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To whom it may concern at COGFA,

I am writing and asking to please support the opposition in closing Dwight Correctional Center, My husband and I have worked at Dwight Correctional center for 24 years. We love our job and Dwight CC is a very unique prison there is no other prison in the State with the programs we have such as helping paws and dog training, camping with the children, Industry, volunteers for religions from our community and Chicago that will probably not be able to travel all the way to Logan . We have 2 children who have grown up in this area and have friends and family here and this would not be fair to me or my family to have to relocate we built our house 10 years ago and never thought we would have to relocate. I grew up in Dwight township and the community is a great area to raise our children. If the prison would close it would hurt many of the surrounding businesses who give many services to the employees at the

Dwight Correctional Center. If we and many of the other employees have to relocate to another facility I don't think we would be able to sell our homes due to many homes already on the market , this would be a tragedy to all who are involved. This is not fair 24 years ago I was promised a retirement and never dreamed I would have to move away and have to fight for my job. It makes no sense to move our offenders to Logan when Dwight CC is in better shape than Logan and just a few months ago they were going to be closed. Moving all the offenders across the state will create havoc on all of the facilities that our already over their capacity and make it more dangerous in the facilities. If the closures continue and they plan to put more offenders on parole that will create a danger in all communities. Please keep Dwight CC and all prisons open.

Lynn Hodge

Randall Hodge

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Simply, my husband and I chose Illinois to live in because we enjoyed this state. We have been in Illinois for 33 years. In 1993 we chose to purchase a farm and raise our own hogs. Just as we were getting up to production numbers the price of hogs went from \$60 dollars a hundred pounds to \$7. Yes we lost money and it wiped us out. My husband had been raising hogs for other farmers for years and had been very successful but it was not meant to be for our family. Simply stated, we know about getting into debt and we know about hard work and sensible approaches. When we knew we were going to have to close down the farm we were about \$250,000 in debt. We know how to manage money. All of our creditors have been paid in full. We are still paying off loans we took out to start the farm. We did request assistance from the State of Illinois and from the Federal Government and we were told rudely we were not worthy. We did not lie, cheat or steal we just addressed the situation from an adult standpoint.

Due to circumstances years later, I ended up being offered a job with the Illinois Department of Corrections, it was an improved pay scale from the position I was working so I took the job to assist in paying off our debt. I have been with the Department Of Corrections since July 2001; I have worked several different positions within the department and have changed institutions to be closer to home. I enjoy my job but I am feeling very abused by my employer. First, in about 2005 the AFSCME union who funds our pension among other things asked all of the members to increase their payments to the retirement. They saw there would be a great need in the near future and if we all pay into the system right then there would be enough money for all of our retirements without increased funds from the state, since the state was not putting money into our system and has not been putting money into the system. So, we voted and agreed and began to put more of our money into the system. Where is our money that we put into the system for these years? We as employees have been asked to do more with less, work smarter, get the job done with less but just get the job done. My family and children have seen government official after government official speak poorly about state employees, then they ask but Mom don't they see what you do? I have never been able to explain this. In an effort to assist the state over the years I have taken my own, pens, pencils general office supplies into work. I do not steal office supplies from my employer; I do not sit around doing nothing at work. Why are the politicians always putting me down?

As a parent my husband and I have 3 beautiful children, one has a masters in Special Education, one is former active military, one is currently in college. None of these children have ever gotten a dime from the State of Illinois for any of their accomplishments. Our oldest went to college in Ohio; they recruited her and assisted her in getting a National Teaching Degree. Our son went to active military; he said he knew there was nothing around here for him. Our youngest is thousands in debt trying to put her through college without assistance, she works full time and goes to school full time. These are good hardworking adults the type any state would appreciate.

I am a correctional counselor at Dwight Correctional Center; I have been through the closure threats of Stateville, Pontiac and now Dwight. Last year after several years of researching I decided to go back to school and get my master's degree. My thoughts were I can do my job better, give more to the facility assist the offenders in a more positive manner. Silly me, I am facing losing my pension; I paid for, our home we paid for, and my livelihood. I keep asking myself, WHY?

Kathy Sandlin  
9245W 2000 S Road  
Bonfield, IL 60913

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My name is Katie Gall. I strongly oppose the potential closure of Dwight CC. Closing such a facility will not only impact the community but it will also have a domino effect on the entire state. Here is my own personal story.

I have had the pleasure of working at Dwight Correctional Center as both a Substance Abuse Counselor for Gateway Health and a Staff Assistant for Wexford Health Source. While working as a Substance Abuse Counselor from 2004-2006, I had the opportunity to work with the Women who struggled with their substance abuse addictions. Incarceration was close to being their rock bottom, with death actually being their rock bottom. These women had no where else to turn. Being in this program helped save many of their lives. We, as counselors, taught them how to manage their life without having to rely on drugs or alcohol to get through the rough times. And that actually their drug of choice or alcohol was the cause of their problems. Seeing the faces of the Women who were "getting it" was priceless. They needed the help and they were finally get the help they deserved. Closing Dwight CC will have a negative impact on those incarceration who need the help with their substance abuse issues. The other facilities do not have the Dual Diagnosis program that helps these women deal with both their Mental issues as well as their Substance Abuse issues but Dwight does.

I am currently a Staff Assistant for Wexford Health Source at Pontiac Correctional Center. I started working for Wexford in March 2011 at Dwight Correctional Center as a PRN, or on an as needed basis. Working for Wexford has given me the opportunity to work with an amazing group of people. These people have poured their blood, sweat, and tears into their jobs. Needless to say, they work very hard. One person in particular is Kathy Kissiar. She has spent the last 22 years working at Dwight Correctional Center. Should Dwight Correctional Center close, her job would not be in jeopardy. She has seniority and has the ability to "bump" others who do not have seniority at other facilities, as would most of the

Wexford Employees. They are able to transfer to other institutions throughout the State. It's something that no one at Dwight wants to do but will have to do if their job is taken from them. Are you seeing the domino effect I spoke of earlier? How fair is that? It's not. It's not fair at all. It's a lose, lose for everyone involved. They may be safe but others they know may not be. That's where I come into play. What I haven't mentioned is the fact that Kathy Kissiar is my mother. And with the potential closing of Dwight Correctional Center, she will have the ability to bump me, her own daughter, out of a job. Again, the domino effect continues.

Thank You,  
Katie Gall

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March 27, 2012

Dear COGFA Board Members,

My name is Sandra Boeckmann and I am writing you regarding the proposed closure of Dwight Correctional Center. I am opposed to the closing of this facility.

There are a number of reasons to leave Dwight CC open and operational. Dwight CC is the closest women's facility to the northern part of the state where the majority of inmates are sentenced before being committed to IDOC. Dwight is located close enough to Cook and its collar counties for families to be able to visit without undue hardship. The large majority of inmates sentenced to IDOC get released. Transferring these women another 2 hours downstate will essentially destroy the connection and bond these women have with their children and families. The price of gas along with the distance for families attempting to transport young children would be devastating.

Dwight CC provides a multitude of programs for its offenders. It is the only reception and classification unit for women in Illinois as well as the only maximum security facility for women. There are drug treatment and dual diagnosis units, a dedicated mental health unit, state of the art hospital facilities, Helping Paws service dog training, cosmetology, commercial cooking, basic dog grooming and training, career technology, adult basic education, GED, and special education classes. Life skills classes, day camp for the women and their children, hospice program, life style redirection, substance abuse education, mental health and sexual abuse programs, and a multitude of additional programs run by volunteers.

The IDOC web site has posted an article dated Feb 10, 2012 showing that a class of 138 correctional officer cadets have graduated and will be assigned to facilities throughout the state. The article goes on to say that "The agency is committed to operating a safe and secure prison system, enhancing prison-based treatment and prevention programs, and the successful reentry of inmates into society, which helps to reduce recidivism" The proposed closures and cuts to state services directly contradict this statement. If IDOC was invested in operating a safe and secure prison system it would not consider consolidating already overcrowded prisons. Incarceration is stressful for both offenders and employees,

yet the Governor wants to add stress to a system that already houses more inmates than it was designed to manage. The Governor has also proposed cutting substance abuse services to inmates. I don't see how that enhances prison based treatment and prevention programs. It certainly will not reduce recidivism.

The rate of unemployment is already too high. Eliminating jobs in a depressed economy only hurts the economy more. The town of Dwight and the surrounding communities continue to survive in these depressed economic times in part due to the working men and women that purchase homes, invest in the well being of their communities, send their children to local schools, and patronize local businesses. Closing Dwight CC would not only eliminate the jobs of the 450 employees at the facility but it would devastate merchants and businesses in Dwight and surrounding towns.

I respectfully request that the COGFA Board opposes the closure of Dwight Correctional Center.

Sandra Boeckmann

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I hope that the closing of Dwight Maximum Security Women's Prison is stopped. It does not help our budget in anyway by transferring Maximum security women inmates to a men's prison and then transferring the men to another prison and then transferring medium security women prisoners with maximum security women. It is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers, and communities. It is also expensive to transfer prisoners and convert prisons. I am not sure what Governor Quinn is trying to accomplish here, but it is reckless and dangerous for many reasons. It disrupts lives and communities, and certainly gives the State of Illinois a bad name as far as making sound financial decisions. The costs involved with the relocations of prisoners, correctional officers, families, and the changing of prisons from men's to women's is financially irresponsible. The effect on the communities is devastating. We can balance our budget by curtailing the spending in all areas. Stop raising the salaries and pensions of our senators and representatives first. They only need one office. Stop all perks. Our representatives need to show that they care about Illinois by taking pension and salary cuts first. They seem to be attacking the disabled, and our most vulnerable first. Step up and lead Illinois in a responsible manner. Our last two governors have gone to prison, and that is why we are in the budget situation we are today. Our politicians have to take responsibility for this. We need to keep jobs in Illinois. We need to make Illinois a safe and prosperous place to live, and releasing prisoners is not the answer, especially maximum and medium security prisoners. Dwight is the only Maximum Security Prison in Illinois. Transferring these prisoners and putting them in with medium security prisoners seems to violate the rights of these women to be treated safely. Lawsuits will soon follow. Please stop these foolish and dangerous closings, before the State of Illinois is hurt further financially. Governor Quinn's fiscal policies are wrecking the state by blackmailing communities and threatening to close their facilities that, in the end knows he can't close because they will devastate the people, community, and State of Illinois financially. The State of Illinois has a name for corrupt politicians since the last two governors are currently in prison. Please work together to stop this financial corruption, ensure the safety of the citizens by supporting our prisons, keep jobs in Illinois. The Illinois Corrections system is designed to house 33,000 inmates, It is currently housing close to 48,000. We cannot close the only maximum

security women's prison in Illinois. The safety of the prisoners, correctional officers, and communities will be put in danger. Also all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there and they're either kept in Dwight or sent to other prisons around the state. Keeping Dwight Correctional Center open is the correct financially sound decision to make. Please keep Jobs in Illinois. Please do not destroy the lives of the people working in these prisons. Please do not destroy the communities they do business in. Even if they try to release prisoners early, there are no jobs available for them and it becomes a revolving door. They end up returning to prison because we are cutting back on the services and people that can help them return to a crime free life. Please make the right decision to keep Dwight Correctional Center open.

Jayson Eversgerd

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being. Please do not destroy our communities. Please do not destroy the lives of correctional officers and all the employees that will lose their jobs. The financial loss to these communities will be devastating for them and the State of Illinois. Many communities and families will not survive this loss. Please do what is right and keep this prison open.

Tom Kirner

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Dear COGFA Board Members,

Governor Quinn proposes closing Dwight Correctional Center effective FY 2013. I am opposed to closing Dwight Correctional Center.

Closing Dwight Correctional when the Illinois prison system is already overcrowded doesn't make sense. The Department of Corrections states on their website that "safety is at the forefront of agency operations." Placing a further burden on already overcrowded facilities appears to contradict that philosophy. Shuffling inmates to other facilities to complete the closing puts the safety and welfare of the general public at risk.

Dwight serves as the only maximum security womens' facility in Illinois. It is the closest facility to the Chicago/Cook County metro area with approximately 60% of the inmates originating from that area. Moving the womens' facility to a location farther away will cost more in ongoing transportation expenses. Since Dwight serves as the reception and classification unit for women, they all have to be remanded to Dwight first.

Dwight provides numerous programs to aid the women in their rehabilitation. Dwight maintains a mental health unit and a hospital. Various vocational training programs as well as basic education and special education classes are provided. Dwight even has a community minded service dog training program. Many of the programs provided at Dwight are staffed by volunteers who may not be able to travel a farther distance to maintain the programs. To say the special programs available at Dwight will be provided elsewhere may not be true.

Moving the women housed at Dwight to a facility farther away could deny the women the support and encouragement of family and loved ones. If it is a hardship for visitors to travel a longer distance that support could diminish. Women especially need those ties as they work toward their transition back to their home life.

Closing Dwight will also have an effect on the local economy. Jobs lost in the private or public sector have the same effect. The ripple effect of a closure will be felt by a wide area of Illinois. Property values and educational opportunities will suffer.

As you consider your decision on Dwight I'd like you to remember that this is more than just a line item in a budget. Your decision will impact the lives of many. Inmates, correction staff, families, and children will all be affected by the consequences of your decision.

I urge you all to vote in favor of Dwight Correctional Center remaining open. Also, as members of the Illinois legislature, I urge you to work with your fellow members to find the funds for Dwight CC in fiscal year 2013.

Donald W Boeckmann



Bourbonnais, IL

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being. Please do not destroy our communities. Please do not destroy the lives of correctional officers and all the employees that will lose their jobs. The financial loss to these communities will be devastating for them and the State of Illinois. Many communities and families will not survive this loss. Please do what is right and keep this prison open.

Pat Kirner

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and

the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being. Please do not destroy our communities. Please do not destroy the lives of correctional officers and all the employees that will lose their jobs. The financial loss to these communities will be devastating for them and the State of Illinois. Many communities and families will not survive this loss. Please do what is right and keep this prison open.

Melissa Kuhl

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Dear Governor Quinn,

My name is Paige Long. I am thirteen years old and in the eighth grade at Odell Grade School in Odell, Illinois. I recently found out that Dwight Correctional Center is one of the proposed facility closures. I believe that there are many reasons why this choice is wrong.

If you close the Dwight Prison my dad and many others are going to lose their jobs. My dad has worked at the prison for fourteen years. Not only my family but many other families will be impacted by your choice. People who have worked at the prison for many years to support their family are going to have to find new jobs. There are over 400 employees at Dwight Correctional Center that will soon be out of a job if you choose to carry out this decision.

If you close the Dwight prison, many people will have to relocate their families. Schools will lose a lot of students due to the fact that they will have to move with their parents to find new jobs. Restaurants and stores will lose customers because of all the people having to move. Children will have to leave friends, teachers, and others behind. I also do not want to leave the church I attend. I will be very sad if my family and I have to move.

I think your decision to close Dwight Correctional Center is wrong because Dwight prison is the only maximum security women's prison in the state of Illinois. Every inmate will have to be moved to one of the already over crowded prisons in either Decatur or Logan Illinois. You will have to spend more money on preparing these prisons for the Dwight inmates. Inmates are proposed to be getting out of prison early.....But, you want to layoff more parole officers. These inmates being let go may hurt people. you would be putting communities in danger.

I really hope you reconsider the decision on closing Dwight Correctional Center. People will be very grateful if you change your mind. Please put Dwight Correctional Center back in the budget and KEEP IT OPEN!

Sincerely,  
Paige Long

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Dear Governor Quinn,

My name is Shayla Long and I am 11years old. I live in Odell, Illinois. I think its's a bad idea to close Dwight Correctional Center. My dad works at Dwight Correctional Center and if it does close a lot people will lose their jobs and some might have to move (like me). If I have to move, I'll be sad.

I think it's a bad idea because some inmates are going to get released early and they could hurt more people. I will be devastated by your choice if you do close the prison and so will others.

It will hurt a lot businesses. Families will move to find new jobs and those businesses will not be able to stay open because of loss of customers. Some schools could lose money because kids will move away to new schools. Houses will be for sale everywhere.

When the women in the prison have to be transfered to Logan or Decatur prison it will cost more money. Female inmates are more expensive than male inmates. My dad loves his job and it provides for my family.

I don't like that people will lose their jobs. If they lose their job they might not be able to pay their house bills and they could lose their house! Why would you want that? It's not fair! I don't want to lose my house. My dad keeps people safe!

Put them back in the budget! Don't close Dwight Correctional Center!

Shayla Long  
Odell, IL

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability Members

I am writing to advise you of my concern over the proposed closing of the Dwight Correctional Center . This facility has long been a vital part of not only Livingston County , but many employees also come from LaSalle and Kankakee counties . All three of these counties are experierencing high unemployment numbers . Closure of this facility would have a devastating effect on our economy . Many families would either move from the area for employment or become unemployed . Dwight is the hub for all female inmates entering the penal system in the state .

I believe this proposed closing needs further review to weigh the negative effect it will have on the entire female prison system .

Respectfully

William Fairfield Chairman  
Livingston County Board

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March 27, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
Attn: Facility Closure  
703 Stratton Building  
Springfield, IL 62706

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to discuss my sincere disgust for the revised budget and facility closure proposed by Governor Quinn. As a State of Illinois worker, my family and I will be very much impacted by the closures.

The emotional aspects of this proposal have had a huge impact on my wife, our family, friends, neighbors, and me. We bought our home in Dwight two years ago. Two weeks after moving in, our house was hit by the tornado and did substantial damage. The days and weeks after the tornado, we saw a town come together and help with the cleanup. Several organizations offered financial assistance with the repairs, and several citizens put together a fundraising event for all those affected. We spent weeks rebuilding our new home, and have never been more proud of our small town. We are a very close knit community that is facing a new tornado that is of Governor Quinn's making. If Governor Quinn closes Dwight Correctional Center, it will have a devastating and catastrophic effect on our small town.

I grew up in Dwight, Illinois. At the age of 20, I went to work for Illinois Youth Center - Joliet and have maintained my employment for 18 years. I have tolerated not only working with some of the most dangerous youth in the system, but also contract negotiations (or lack of), procedure changes, and personal physical assault. While I might not have the most rewarding job, I am very proud of what I do to protect the citizens of this state.

Governor Quinn is proposing to close both Dwight Correctional Center and IYC-Joliet in a cost saving effort for his budget. However, the economic impact on these closures would spread through several counties. The small amount of employees with high seniority might be able to fill a vacancy at a nearby facility; however, the majority of employees with lower seniority would either have to move, or increase travel time and expenses.

The Governor and his minions want you to believe there are enough jobs in the local areas to absorb the people displaced by the closures, but they are wrong! Dwight Correctional Center and IYC Joliet are only 35 miles apart. The closest facilities to IYC Joliet are as follows: Stateville - 10 miles, Sheridan - 35 miles, St. Charles - 40 miles, IYC Chicago - 54 miles, Pontiac - 55 miles, IYC Kewanee - 100 miles. On paper, the distances do not seem that extreme. However, the travel time and expense are a whole different story. If I, for example, would transfer to IYC St. Charles or IYC Chicago, it would add an additional 90 minutes (one way) to my 35 minute commute. This would mean I am driving over 2 hours to get to work and two hours home from work on a clear summer day. But, we all know traffic, weather, and construction can slow traffic on any given day, especially as you get closer to the city. Furthermore, with gas approaching \$5.00 per gallon, I am looking at an extra \$100 per week in gas alone. This would cause great stress on every aspect of my family's life with loss of time to spend with family, more time on the road with additional wear and tear expenses on my vehicle, increase in car insurance premium due to longer commute, and less money saved each month.

During my career at IYC Joliet I have seen the population wax and wane. Historically, our facility has been the only maximum security youth center in the state. Although, in the recent response from Author Bishop suggests that the state has several other maximum units, he has failed to mention the "rest of the story." IYC Kewanee houses more mentally unstable and socially challenged youth, thus, a majority of the youth are in need of more mental health supervision. Arthur Bishop states that IYC Harrisburg is a maximum security facility. However, vast majorities of the youth are minimum and medium security offenders, and maximum offenders are placed there only for temporary stays. Furthermore, staff in Harrisburg has not had the proper exposure to maximum offenders; putting them at a higher risk of physical assault should IYC Joliet youth be transferred.

Mr. Bishop also implies that youth from IYC Joliet will be distributed throughout the state, with the most aggressive Consent Decree youth being moved to IYC St. Charles. IYC St. Charles is currently attempting to prepare 2 buildings for maximum security housing as they are not equipped to handle said youth. And, simply placing maximum security fencing around a building DOES NOT make it a maximum security facility if the staff are not properly trained. Additionally, IYC St. Charles has had multiple escapes in the recent past. IYC Joliet has had zero in my 18 years of service.

Mr. Bishop also states that there are beds available at other facilities and those places can accept youth. However, 300 beds do not mean they can handle 300 youth. At IYC Joliet alone, there are a large number of single bunk youth who are not to be placed with other youth for safety reasons. Many times, these single bunks are in a double occupancy room due to logistics, cutting down on the allowable beds

drastically. All facilities have these youth. Mr. Bishop's proposal would cause overcrowding and staff (and youth) safety concerns.

The costs to make these proposed closures would far exceed the suggested savings. Transporting the youth to and from court would be in the hundreds of thousands yearly. The costs of food, clothing, electric, medical, and water are all standard costs and would follow the youth, regardless of location. These are not going to change, but changing facilities to and transferring youth is expensive. Additionally, the state will then have several additional workers without work in an already depressed economy. They would be drawing unemployment, and possibly public aid. Where is that money going to come from?

From a financial view or a safety and security view, there are no logical reasons for the closure of IYC Joliet. Here is a list of points to be looked at prior to making the decision.

- The state is paying over \$2 million per year for a lease on a facility in Chicago to house approximately 50-70 juveniles. IYC Joliet is an owned property that houses 200-250 juveniles
- IYC Joliet has some of the newer buildings for juvenile facilities and other facilities have condemned buildings or problems with asbestos, making it dangerous for improvements to be done
- The state will have to put money into making other facilities maximum security ready. IYC Joliet can handle minimum, medium, and maximum offenders in it's current, unchanged, unimproved condition
- The state has already made over \$2 million in upgrades at IYC Joliet in the past two years including new roofing and suicide proof beds.
- IYC has the highest risk, most violent, aggressive, problematic offenders in the entire state. Other facilities are neither equipped nor trained to handle these youth. Staff at IYC Joliet is both equipped and trained.
- Governor Quinn has offered 100's of millions in tax breaks this fiscal year alone, and then he says closing these prisons will result in the exact same amount of savings. Ironic, no?

Also, please remember, these are not just "jobs" that are to be cut. These are our careers, our livelihoods. We have all put time, education, training, and effort into pursuing our careers at IYC Joliet. Choosing to close IYC Joliet feels nothing short of personal. We have built our families, homes, and lives in surrounding areas. We are sons, daughters, mothers, fathers, grandmothers, grandfathers who have all given our lives and careers to the State of Illinois. Our time and commitment make IYC Joliet a leader in Juvenile Justice. Many IYC Joliet workers do not work Monday thru Friday, 8-4. Many work nights, afternoons, and weekends to ensure the safety and security of the facility and surrounding communities are kept to the highest standard.

Thank you for your time. Closing IYC Joliet would be a HUGE mistake!

Sincerely,

Randall Irvin  
IYC Joliet  
Resident of Dwight, IL

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being. Our governor, senators, and representatives, will be held accountable for actions that effect the safety of its people and communities.

Nancy Eversgerd

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April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I've started this letter a hundred times. I keep trying to convince myself that if I write a letter so epic, I can change your mind (COFGA) and you (COFGA) will put money for the Dwight Correctional Center back into the Governor's budget. But time is running out and I have yet to find the great words to change a little slice of life for so many people.

I am sure or maybe just hopeful you have received hundreds and hopefully thousands of letters asking for your mercy on Dwight. Asking to keep Dwight Correctional Center open, explaining the financial impact closing the prison would have not only on the Village of Dwight, but also the surrounding counties and towns. These towns provide many employees to the prison and they in turn spend their money in Dwight. Grocery shopping, eating lunch or dinner, perhaps working out or maybe renting movies, regardless of their choice, revenue is being funneled into Dwight. I will tell you that the economy has hit everyone hard and there are many houses for sale or empty in Dwight, and many more will be empty and never filled due to lack of jobs available in the Village itself if the Dwight Correctional Center closes. But I'm not going to tell you all the financial reasons to not close Dwight Correctional Center. I'm not going to tell you it doesn't make sense to move the women to a new location, that closing any prison schedule makes sense really.

I'm going to tell you about a place called Dwight, IL. A place I call home. A place my friends from the city (Arizona Natives) call "Mayberry" after they visit.

My name is Marla Kinkade and I was born and raised in Dwight, IL. Growing up, I hated Dwight, so small, so boring. Dwight was just a town I couldn't wait to get out of. And I did. I left Dwight for a career and "life" in the fast lane. Straight to Phoenix Arizona, where I thought they knew what life is all about.



Fast forward a few years, and I'm settled and own my own home. I do not know my neighbors, and we have 6 foot block walls around every property line. We park in garages year round. I do not wave as I pass neighbors on the street, and I would never see them in 6 lanes of traffic. I became just another number, just another person. The "natives" as they call themselves are proud that they never have to travel out of a 5 mile radius for anything they want. What? I had to drive 35 miles for the closest mall where I grew up. I used to think it was horrible living so far away from anything "real" but now, back in Dwight at age 35, I realize the commute is worth knowing my neighbors. It's a strange fast life in a city where nobody knows your name. It's lonely, and more desolate then growing up in the middle of corn fields.

Twelve years later life handed me some lemons. Broken hearted, broke and broke down emotionally, I made the choice to find the lemonade at the place my core values and beliefs were instilled, I moved HOME to Dwight, IL. ..where everyone knows your name, where I said I would never return to as a teenager. Dwight's too small for me I would say. How wrong I was about Dwight. All of the things as teenager I disliked about Dwight were things I had grown to love. Dwight is rich in history, (Frank Lloyd Wright designed the First National Bank of Dwight. It is currently the only bank Wright designed still operating) culture and knowing your neighbor. In an ever increasing world of solitude by electronics, knowing a real person and all your neighbors becomes outdated but not less loved.

August 2008 I started life all over in Dwight. And a year ago, I ran for Village Trustee and won as the top vote getter. I had been gone for 12 years, but Dwight doesn't forget. Because until I have children, I will be Dave Kinkade's youngest, Dawn Thomas' Daughter and Audrey's younger sister. That's the legacy I follow in Dwight. One that I didn't know I was proud of until I moved home and felt the family. The family of 4200 residents, where most know your name. Just ask my friends, I know everyone so they say. And now, I'm Marla. The Artist. My legacy has begun. There are more legacies starting in Dwight besides mine starting every day. And closing Dwight Correctional Center all but ensures those legacies end. Young families starting out will move to find jobs, their parents will follow to be closer to their children. My county, Livingston County, is rich in farmers and poor on jobs. Losing 400 plus jobs is devastating to a town this size. Devastating to the families directly affected and those affects will only ripple to extended families trying to help.

I am not unaware of the current crisis our state and country is in. I understand that Illinois has bills to pay, less money coming in, lots of money going out etc. I also understand that creating more loss of wages in an already struggling state is not a smart idea. I know that there are other options to finding money in the budget to save the Dwight Correctional Center. I beg you to look for these options. Cut programs that aren't necessary, change loopholes, do something other than displace thousands of workers with all the intended closings around the State of Illinois. Illinois is my state, Dwight is my home. I want to be proud to be from my "Mayberry", from Dwight for many years to come.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I hope I have shed some insight on the human side of what being from a small town means not only to me, but for so many others who call this home.

Please put Dwight Correctional Center back in the Governor's budget. The future of a small town depends on it.

Sincerely,

Marla E. Kinkade

Dwight, IL

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To whom this may concern:

I know you have probably received many statements on the proposed closures by Gov. Quinn, so I will keep this one very short.

I was working for the Department of Resources in Morris, IL 30 miles (60 miles/day) from my Livingston County home when I was laid off in a state-wide layoff by our previous governor.

The **only** position open to me was at the Danville Correctional Center. The only way I was able to accept that position was because I had some family members I could stay with who lived in the Paxton, IL area. However, this increased my driving to 55 miles one way or 110 miles/day, but at least I had a job and did not have to sign up for Unemployment.

This continued for three years when a position opened at the Dwight Correctional Center and I was able to transfer back to Livingston County. The plan was to return to my small house in the country which had been vacant for the time I was working in Danville, get the needed repairs caught up and sell it when I retired. Now that I have been able to make progress on those repairs, what will it be worth even if I could sell it if the prison is closed? Considering what the market is now, probably nothing!

I am **also a victim** of the early release of prisoners. My car and one parked next to me was broken into during the week between Christmas and New Years. The glove compartment was strewn all over the inside and outside of my car and some of my items were found in the other car. We had apparently interrupted the robbery by returning to our cars. Some of the items were found, but I will have to wait up to two years for them to be returned as they are needed for evidence – including my Garmin, a clutch purse with its contents, money etc.-some items have not been found yet. The 17 year old juvenile charged had just been released early on parole. The police suspect another was involved as he usually does not 'work' alone, but to my knowledge he has not given them any information on anyone else involved. He is also charged with a Christmas Day robbery and breaking into a funeral home in town while the owner was sleeping upstairs – stealing her wallet from the next room. He also stole a shotgun and plenty of ammunition in addition to other items, but what would have happened if she had awakened during the robbery?

I was widowed in 1997 with three children still in school. I struggled with two part time jobs before my DNR layoff, but with the increased distances and gas prices I have been unable to save much for the future. With the loss of this job, the decreased value to my home after investing in it, even assuming I am not another victim of early parolees, the future isn't looking too good. I might also mention that I am already 65 years old!

Sincerely,

Marlene Mertes

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Katherine Stewart  
510 N. Clinton St.  
Dwight, IL 60420

April 2, 2012

Dear Governor Quinn,

I am writing to you today to express my deep concern about your current proposal to close the Dwight Correctional Center. While I appreciate the need to be fiscally responsible, I do not think this plan would save money, and I feel that it would devastate our community.

I am a teacher at Dwight Grade School. Our school is currently facing great financial hardship, largely due to funds still owed to us by the State of Illinois. We have had to cut excellent teachers and sacrifice programs to try to make up the deficit. We are doing what we can to make the best of a tough situation.

If the Dwight Correctional Center closes, many community members would lose their jobs. Jobs are scarce everywhere, and these people could have to move. A decrease in the population will result in a decrease in enrollment for the school. This will create further hardship for our already struggling school. A town with a weak employment outlook and a struggling school system is going to have trouble attracting new families and businesses. This "trickle-down effect" is far reaching and harmful in every way for the community of Dwight.

This proposal would not save money for the state. The facility in Dwight is well suited for the inmates that are there. Another facility will have to be remodeled to accommodate the increase in inmate population, and adapt to the potential difference in needs. It would be more effective to continue to utilize the physical resources that are already in place.

I urge you to reconsider your proposal to close the Dwight Correctional Center. A strong state needs to have strong communities. I know that you want the best for the State of Illinois. Please help the community of Dwight to stay strong! Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Katherine Stewart

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Sharon R. Soto  
511 N. Clinton St.  
Dwight, IL 60420

April 2, 2012

Dear Governor Quinn,

I am writing to you today to express my deep concern about your current proposal to close the Dwight Correctional Center. While I appreciate the need to be fiscally responsible, I do not think this plan would save money, and I feel that it would devastate our community.

I am the Food Service Director at Dwight Grade/High School. Our school is currently facing great financial hardship, largely due to funds still owed to us by the State of Illinois. We have had to cut excellent teachers and sacrifice programs to try to make up the deficit. We are doing what we can to make the best of a tough situation.

If the Dwight Correctional Center closes, many community members would lose their jobs. Jobs are scarce everywhere, and these people could have to move. A decrease in the population will result in a decrease in enrollment for the school. This will create further hardship for our already struggling school. A town with a weak employment outlook and a struggling school system is going to have trouble attracting new families and businesses. This "trickle-down effect" is far reaching and harmful in every way for the community of Dwight.

As the Food Service Director, I can foresee an increase in Free and Reduced Breakfast/Lunches (and school fees), due to the closing of the Dwight Correctional Center. Looking at the BIG PICTURE this proposal would not save money for the state.

I urge you to reconsider your proposal to close the Dwight Correctional Center. A strong state needs to have strong communities. I know that you want the best for the State of Illinois. Please help the community of Dwight to stay strong! Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sharon R. Soto  
Food Service Manager  
Dwight Schools/Arbor Management

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being. Our governor, senators, and representatives, will be held accountable for actions that effect the safety of its people and communities.

Eric Eversgerd

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To whom it may concern,

I have been an officer at the Dwight Correction Center for 11 years this coming June. A closure of this facility would impact my family in significantly negative way. I am a single parent with an 8 year old son named Elijah. I am doing this in a one income household only 20 minutes from the Dwight Institution. My mother also lives with me due to medical issues that have left her unable to live alone and on oxygen 100 percent of the time and needing a lung transplant at some point in the future. It seems

when it rains it pours, because about a month ago I found out my father has lymphoma and will begin chemotherapy treatments next week. The doctors caught it very early, so we are lucky in that aspect.

If the prison closes, the worst case scenario is I DON'T have a job and the best case is I will be commuting from a significant distance because relocating is not a feasible option. I do not have enough seniority to transfer to a close facility, so having to commute is going to limit my time with my family, most importantly with Elijah. Besides travel time, I may be assigned to a later shift. How will it be possible for my son to participate in activities he is involved in like cub scouts and baseball? I recently chose not to promote at this time in my career, because it would have caused me to be assigned to the 3/11pm shift. Sure it would have improved my financial situation, but I would not have had any time with my son, and he IS what is most important.

I'm sure you have received many emails from my coworkers with similar impact stories. This closure will not only affect them, but our entire community and surrounding counties. It will be like a pebble thrown in a pond as it continues to negatively ripple outward from the focal point, Dwight.

I hope you consider every aspect of this important decision put upon you, and keep Dwight open!

Sincerely,

Tammy Bentley

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight

Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being. Please do not destroy our communities. Please do not destroy the lives of correctional officers and all the employees that will lose their jobs. The financial loss to these communities will be devastating for them and the State of Illinois. Many communities and families will not survive this loss. Please do what is right and keep this prison open.

Martha Litteken

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Dear COGFA Members,

I am writing you to voice my concerns and opinions over Governor Quinn's decision to close the Dwight Correctional center. As you know, earlier this year, Governor Quinn proposed closing many state prisons and mental institutions. While I have little knowledge of the operations of many of those, I am strongly opposed to the closing of the Dwight facility. Throughout this letter I will explain the many reasons for my opposition to the closure. Just a little background on me, I have lived in Dwight for almost ten years. We moved up to the Dwight area after I was laid off from my job in Quincy, IL. I have a Bachelor of Science in Electronic Engineering Technology. I graduated from college in 1988 and have worked for four companies in Illinois since graduating. I currently work for Tellabs, Inc. in Naperville as a Senior Test Engineer. I am also on the Dwight Grade School board.

First, there is the economic impact to Dwight and the surrounding communities and counties. There are fifty-nine AFSCME employees of the Dwight Correctional Center that live in Dwight. There are thirty-seven students in the Dwight Public Schools that are children of these fifty-nine employees. This does not include the support employees the correctional center uses that are not part of AFSCME. The financial impact to the community if they have to move out of Dwight or worse yet, lose their jobs, is very serious. If they need to relocate to another correctional center, their houses would have to be put on the market. The number of houses already for sale in Dwight is higher than the state average while the property value is decreasing. My property value dropped fifteen percent last year. A further flood of houses for sale in Dwight would further decrease property values in the town. If some of the employees actually lose their jobs, there is a potential for foreclosure due to the loss of income. Correctional officer carries with it very special skills that are not easily transferred to other positions of equal pay.

The impact to the school districts would be devastating as well. The state pays around six thousand five hundred dollars per student for education. With thirty-seven students being affected and probably leaving the districts, that is a loss of two hundred forty thousand five hundred dollars in aid just from the state funds. Add that to the loss from the property values and foreclosure potentials and you can see that it would be devastating to the school districts. The tax rates are already at their maximums and I am actually paying seventy-seven dollars less than I did last year. This is a scary

situation because it could mean the closure of the Dwight Grade School in the next couple of years if the revenue doesn't increase or at least stay the same. We are cutting costs everywhere we can at the grade school but some of those cuts mean jobs. If the school closes, the children would have to be bused to another school in another town. The governor is also talking about cutting transportation funds for the schools. How can the children be bussed if the funds are cut? It would make more sense to the parents to move to the town where the school actually is thereby putting more homes up for sale while reducing the property value at the same time. The high school would eventually have to close as well because there would not be a student base to support it anymore. You can see how this would continue on until the Village of Dwight would fade into nothingness. All that would be left is a couple of truck stops on some interstate exits. Dwight is such a small town, the impact to it would be devastating. A city such as Tinley Park can absorb the closing of the Mental Health center with little impact due to its population. Dwight cannot. Dwight is experiencing layoffs at Donnelley R R & Sons and rumor is the Fox Center is in line to be cut too. Dwight is in a perfect storm and will not be able to survive.

Second, there would be an impact to the families of the residents of the Dwight Correctional Center. At this time, sixty percent of the residents are from the Cook County area. DCC is approximately an hour and a half from the center of Cook County. The children of the residents come and visit on weekend and during other visiting times when available. These children need some contact with their mothers. It is not the child's fault that the mother is in prison. The three hour round trip along with the visitation time is a hardship, but reasonable. They are able to do these visits they same day with reasonable costs to the family. I understand the Governor plans on moving the operations down to Lincoln, Illinois. This is an hour and a half further south which would make it a six hour round trip for visitation. This will start putting a financial hardship on the families for the residents. I do not feel the children should be punished for the mother's sins.

Third, does the governor have a plan completed for the transition? My understanding is Dwight Correctional Center is the only maximum security women's prison in Illinois. It is also the central processing center for all women in Illinois convicted of a crime. They all come through Dwight for processing and then, if necessary, are transferred to their correctional center based on the security level needed. Transferring the residents to Lincoln, Illinois would require a large number of resources and coordination. First, the maximum security prison in Lincoln is a men's correctional center. The women's correctional center is not maximum security. The residents would have to be moved from the men's maximum security correctional center to another one somewhere in the state or the women's would have to be brought to maximum security specifications. There would then have to be a swap. The men would be moved to the women's prison and the women would be moves to the men's prison. This has issues of its own ranging from security to accommodations. The "new" women's facility would have to be updated to accommodate women. Has the cost of modifying both of these facilities been calculated? What are the security issues while these changes are being completed? Second, the processing infrastructure needs to be put into place. It is already in place in Dwight. This is not just a computer program. It is a whole infrastructure to identify and place an inmate where they need to be. It has been in place in Dwight for many years and would be expensive to start over at a new facility. Third, there is the training that the residents receive as part of their rehabilitation. These women learn skills that can



help them find employment outside of Dwight Correctional Center when they are released. They learn how to train dogs, groom animals, and many other skills that can help them feel like they are actually doing something good. Do you remember getting your first paycheck? You have worked really hard and you are rewarded for it. It is that sense of self worth that motivates people. All of these facilities would need to be set up at the new facility. These numbers are adding up and to me, I don't see a cost savings for the state.

Fourth, there are the casualties due to the loss of the Dwight Correctional Center, its employees, and its families. I have already talked about the impact on the school districts but what about the rest of the community. Currently, there are twelve or more restaurants with another one opening in the future, eight gas stations, a few hair stylists/barber shops, four or more realty companies and other specialty shops. With the closure of the correctional center, half of these businesses may close. Realistically, the three gas stations in town would close due to lack of business. The four out by the interstate would probably be ok. Most of the restaurants in town would probably close and maybe one or two out by the interstate. All but one of the hair salons would most likely close. This would result in a loss of revenue for the village due to lost sales taxes, property taxes, and property value. It's not only loss of sales tax for the village but also for the county and the state. All of those pennies add up to revenue. There would also be an impact to local charities, churches, and community groups. Churches would end up losing members of their congregations and face closing the church if the congregation couldn't support the church anymore. Can you imagine having to close the church? Community groups such as the Lions and the Knights of Columbus would also be affected for the same reasons. Charities would be affected because they would not receive the donations from the churches and community groups that were forced to close due to lack of funds. The Illinois Basset Rescue is located in Dwight. They have a Basset Waddle to kick off the Dwight Harvest Days parade in September. With the loss of the Dwight Correctional Center, Dwight Harvest Days would eventually end due to lack of funds from the closures of the businesses, loss of population, and loss of taxes, which would mean an end to the Basset Waddle and either the Basset Rescue moving out of Dwight or closing altogether. DCC closing doesn't just affect people, it affects animals too.

Finally, I believe there are many hidden and not so hidden items the governor has missed while making this decision. There are always budget overruns. How much will this transition cost the state when it is complete? I think it will take years to see any saving by closing Dwight Correctional Center. I believe the stats will have a reduction of revenue due to the number of foreclosures that will occur due to the loss of property value. I believe people would rather deal with bad credit for a while and have their house foreclosed on than pay money for a house that is worth less than they paid for it. A not so hidden item is that the prisons are already overcrowded and now the governor wants to close more. How does the governor plan on relieving the overcrowding in the prison system by closing correctional centers? I don't understand the thought process here.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter, listening to my thoughts, and considering my input. I was just talking about the impact to Dwight here. This doesn't even consider the thirty-nine employees that live in Pontiac, the sixteen that live in Odell, the twenty-eight that live in other Livingston county towns, the forty-four that live in Streator, the sixteen that live in other LaSalle county

towns, the twenty-seven from Kankakee, the eighteen from Bourbonnais, the ten from Bradley, the twenty-one from other Kankakee county towns, or the impact to those towns and counties. I was born in Normal, grew up in Frankfort, have lived in Chicago, Braidwood, Quincy, and Dwight. I have lived in Illinois my whole life. We chose Dwight because it was within reasonable driving distance to Naperville for me. The children would have more opportunities in the Dwight schools than in the bigger schools like Naperville. I have one child that was a three sport athlete in grade school and in high school. My son plays football and runs track. He along, with his track teammates are on pace to break at least two if not four of the standing school track records in the grade school. They would not have this opportunity due to the class sizes in areas around Naperville. The classes are small and we know everything that goes on in the schools. We are friends with his friends and their parents. We laugh, cheer, and support each other's children. This type of pride and friendship isn't found in a large city with large schools. I don't want to see the small towns in Illinois disappearing due to shortsightedness and quick decisions. I don't want this state to spend a dollar to save a dime. I feel we are going down a dead end and fear Illinois will go bankrupt making decisions like this. Dwight will not go gently into that good night.

Thank you,

Marc A. Ellis

407 South Lincoln Street

Dwight, IL 60420

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison. Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all

the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being. Please do not destroy our communities. Please do not destroy the lives of correctional officers and all the employees that will lose their jobs. The financial loss to these communities will be devastating for them and the State of Illinois. Many communities and families will not survive this loss. Please do what is right and keep this prison open.

Mary Schulte

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Hello all,

I wanted to make a personal note to thank those of you who came to the Dwight Community and heard our testimony in how the Dwight Women's Correctional Center closure will affect us and our town. I know that each of you have your thoughts and wanted to send you mine.

I did not present, but thought maybe a follow up letter was appropriate. I serve as the Dwight Common School Board of Education President, reside in Dwight, send my kids to Dwight Schools and love living here. I spent time away, serving in the military only to decide that this was "home." I have taken my dog to the prison for training and that program is a wonderful ancillary service. It teaches women who may be dysfunctional with people, how to treat animals. As many of us are aware, animals don't care about your past and some of these animals have taught the women to love again. When I lived in town (now I live in the country), I often had families stop by my home asking for directions. Many times it was grandparents with children of the women that were incarcerated. Occasionally, there would be a van of five or six children and only one or two adults. I often thought how lucky these children are to be able to get to see their mothers. The people who stopped were always polite, thankful and happy that they were so close to seeing their loved one.

During the hearing, I was concerned that the facts the DOC presented. I looked up the cost of inmates at Lincoln when I heard the cost would be around \$16k for a female inmate there. According to the IDOC website, in 2010 the cost for a male inmate at Logan was \$17.6k and there were only 60 beds left to be at maximum capacity. I find it hard to believe that first, the cost for female inmates would be cheaper than males and there will be that many beds available. According to the IDOC website, they also say that the cost for an inmate at Lincoln is \$22K. The numbers that they presented just do not add up for me. I was also concerned because many times over I heard about how the facility is in need of repair. I know that the facility should be kept up to date and if it hasn't that is just not the fault of the Dwight Community and the inmates, families and workers.

In reference to Senator Trotter's question about how can we help and all share in the cuts; I believe that education takes a pretty hard hit. My proposal is that as the state budget is given, the state determines

what grants and funds will be \*really\* available and tells us that only those will be there. Instead of allowing the schools to \*think\* they will get money and then it doesn't come in until the next year. If you want to cut transportation, cut transportation but let me know in advance, as a school board member, so that I can make some decisions for our school at that time. Usually what has happened, the state tells us that we will get something, the comptroller doesn't have the the funds to disperse and we are left waiting well into the next fiscal year to receive funds. This budget process is a joke. We budget, taking all things into consideration and then are told we will receive X dollars for this year and then it is one or two years before we actually see those funds.

As a board president, we just cut 13 positions at our grade school. We eliminated 6th grade sports. The impact of having more students move away as employees reassess their living arrangements scares me. Our school will easily lose students, thus making all programs harder to fund. Our assessed valuation in our district continues to decline and I only see this value getting lower if DCC is closed and families begin moving out of town. Thus we will fall victim to the double edged sword of the state, where enrollment decreases, state funding decreases and local property values decrease. And to top it off, the state will still need to spend thousands of dollars to maintain the facility when closed.

I appreciate your time and efforts that you are putting into the process. I know that there are not nearly enough hours in the day for everything to get done. Again, thank you for visiting our community and taking the time to listen to everyone's thoughts.

Sincerely,  
Deb Christoff  
Concerned Resident  
President, Board of Education, Dwight Common School

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I am very much against closing Tamms, Dwight, and any of the other facilities slated to close. So you close something actually several facilities to try and balance the budget this year, what about next year and the year after that? There are sooooo many places the state could save money but closing any facility is not the answer. Please do not allow these facilities to close.

Debbie Dowdy

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison.

Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being. Please do not destroy our communities. Please do not destroy the lives of correctional officers and all the employees that will lose their jobs. The financial loss to these communities will be devastating for them and the State of Illinois. Many communities and families will not survive this loss. Please do what is right and keep this prison open.

It also seems a bit unusual that the Governor tried to close the correctional center that he now wants to sent the prisoners from Dwight to. They also found many problems and improvements needed with every prison they have tried to close in the previous years. Someone appears to be exaggerating the facts. I wonder why? Why are the taxpayers being lied to. We do not need overcrowded prisons. Nor do we need dangerous communities to live in. I believe the senators and representatives can find other areas to cut that will help our budget including their raises. I know many communities in Illinois will vote differently in future elections if these prisons are closed. We will hold our representatives responsible for crime rates that are rising. If our college children cannot find jobs, prisoners that are released early will not be able to find employment with little help. They will again commit a crime to survive and end up back in our overcrowded prison system. You are not providing solutions to problems. You are creating problems in Illinois.

Don Schulte

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Gary Litteken

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I am writing concerning the closure of Dwight Women's Correctional Center in Dwight, Illinois. Dwight Correctional center is the only Maximum Security Women's Prison in Illinois, and all female prisoners are processed in Dwight. They do their required medical examinations and shots there before they are kept at Dwight or sent to other prisons. Transferring over 1000 maximum security women prisoners to another Men's medium security prison, and then transferring the men to another prison is dangerous to the prisoners, correctional officers and communities. This move will be costly considering the moving of several thousand prisoners, and the changing of a medium security men's prison to a women's prison.

Our prison system is overcrowded, which puts correctional officers, communities, and prisoners at risk. The State of Illinois is setting themselves up for lawsuits involving the treatment of women by overcrowding them into one prison. They are placing a terrible burden on communities involved and the disruption to the lives of the correctional officers. This action is irresponsible, dangerous, and costly to the State of Illinois. It does nothing for the budget of Illinois. Governor Quinn and other Illinois lawmakers have given themselves pay raises, but they continue to try to cut state agencies, close state facilities. If we are facing this terrible deficit we first need to stop pay raises and that needs to start with our lawmakers. Their offices, salaries, and perks need to take the biggest cut first. We need to keep jobs in the State of Illinois. We need to keep Illinois safe. Our last two governors are currently in prison. This seems to be where our problems are occurring and that is with the governing of Illinois, not with all the workers in the State of Illinois that are paying their salaries. Please do not close our prisons and mental health facilities in Illinois, which are so needed. Please do the right thing for State of Illinois, and show the people of Illinois that we still have honest and responsible representatives. Keep Dwight Women's Correctional Center Open and the mental health facilities that our developmentally disabled so desperately need for their well being. Please do not destroy our communities. Please do not destroy the lives of correctional officers and all the employees that will lose their jobs. The financial loss to these communities will be devastating for them and the State of Illinois. Many communities and families will not survive this loss. Please do what is right and keep this prison open.

It also seems a bit unusual that the Governor tried to close the correctional center that he now wants to sent the prisoners from Dwight to. They also found many problems and improvements needed with every prison they have tried to close in the previous years. Someone appears to be exaggerating the facts. I wonder why? Why are the taxpayers being lied to. We do not need overcrowded prisons. Nor do we need dangerous communities to live in. I believe the senators and representatives can find other areas to cut that will help our budget including their raises. I know many communities in Illinois will vote differently in future elections if these prisons are closed. We will hold our representatives responsible for crime rates that are rising. If our college children cannot find jobs, prisoners that are released early will not be able to find employment with little help. They will again commit a crime to survive and end up back in our overcrowded prison system. You are not providing solutions to problems. You are creating problems in Illinois. We need to work on medicaid, oversized pensions of school superintendents, and lawmakers, which is creating a huge deficit. This will not be helped by overcrowding prisons and laying off middle classed workers.

Sue Litteken

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# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

4/4/12

**SUBJECT MATTER: Closure of Dwight Correctional Center**

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: Justin Eggenberger

Title: Village Trustee

Firm / Business or Agency: Village of Dwight

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITION:**  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

**TESTIMONY:**  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

**WRITTEN COMMENTS:**





# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

4/4/12

**SUBJECT MATTER: Closure of Dwight Correctional Center**

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: Jared Anderson

Title: Village Trustee

Firm / Business or Agency: Village of Dwight

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITION:**  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

**TESTIMONY:**  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

**WRITTEN COMMENTS:**



# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

4/4/12

**SUBJECT MATTER:** Closure of Dwight Correctional Center

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: Nick Kester

Title: Village Trustee

Firm / Business or Agency: Village of Dwight

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITION:**  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

**TESTIMONY:**  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

**WRITTEN COMMENTS:**



# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

4/4/12

**SUBJECT MATTER: Closure of Dwight Correctional Center**

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: Marla Kinkade

Title: Village Trustee

Firm / Business or Agency: Village of Dwight

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITION:**  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

**TESTIMONY:**  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

**WRITTEN COMMENTS:**



# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

4/4/12

**SUBJECT MATTER:** Closure of Dwight Correctional Center

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: Tim Dougherty

Title: Village Trustee

Firm / Business or Agency: Village of Dwight

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITION:**  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

**TESTIMONY:**  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

**WRITTEN COMMENTS:**



# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

4/4/12

**SUBJECT MATTER: Closure of Dwight Correctional Center**

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: Greg Johnson

Title: Trustee

Firm / Business or Agency: Illinois Fraternal Order of Police District 3

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITION:**  Proponent  Opponent  No Position

**TESTIMONY:**  Oral  Written Statement Filed  Record of Appearance Only

**WRITTEN COMMENTS:**





# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Co-Chair Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg - Co-Chair Representative Patricia R. Bellock

## RECORD OF COMMISSION WITNESS

4/4/12

**SUBJECT MATTER: Closure of Dwight Correctional Center**

**IDENTIFICATION:**

Name: Michael Woods

Title: Village Trustee

Firm / Business or Agency: Village of Dwight

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITION:**     Proponent     Opponent     No Position

**TESTIMONY:**     Oral     Written Statement Filed     Record of Appearance Only

**WRITTEN COMMENTS:**