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March 27, 2012

Mr. Arthur Bishop  
Director  
Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice  
707 N. 15<sup>th</sup> St.  
Springfield, IL 62704

Dear Director Bishop:

The State Facilities Closure Act states that: “No action may be taken to implement the recommendation for closure of a State facility until 50 days after the filing of any required recommendation.” The recommendation for the Illinois Youth Center (IYC) at Joliet was filed on March 16, 2012. Accordingly, there should be no action performed to implement the recommendation for closure until May 5, 2012.

Potential violations of the State Facilities Closure Act were recently brought to our attention related to an emergency contract awarded by the Department of Juvenile Justice for work to be done at the IYC-St. Charles facility. In reviewing documents provided us, it does give the distinct impression that the work being done at IYC-St. Charles bears some correlation to the closure of IYC-Joliet.

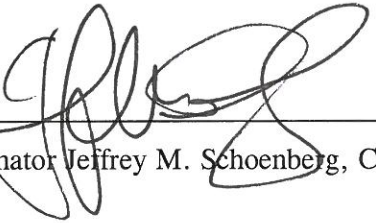
In the justification for the original emergency contract for improvements at IYC-St. Charles dated March 7, 2012, the closure of IYC-Joliet is specifically cited as the reason for the relocation of 240 maximum-security recipients from IYC-Joliet to IYC-St. Charles. This relocation of youth offenders is articulated as the root cause that precipitates the need for upgrades and improvements at IYC-St. Charles in a timely manner.

While this contract was initiated prior to the filing of the recommendation for closure, emails associated with the contract reflect that amendments to the emergency contract were filed on March 22, 2012 -- during the time period where no actions should be taking place to implement the facility closure plan. Any upgrades or improvements at the IYC-St. Charles facility done under the emergency contract would also appear to violate the “no action” language of the State Facility Closure Act.

In reviewing the Department of Juvenile Justice's response to these claims, the Commission believes that even though improvements to IYC-St. Charles were long-standing requests, the work was directly initiated at this time due to the planned closure of IYC-Joliet. The Commission is disappointed in the Department's apparent disregard of the State Facility Closure Act as established in the emails between the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Capital Development Board that specifically reference the State Facility Closure Act timeline.


The Commission strongly urges the Department of Juvenile Justice to immediately cease all further activity related to the implementation of the facility closure of IYC-Joliet. Further activity by the Department in this manner, may precipitate additional action by the Commission.

Sincerely,



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Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg, Co-Chair



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Representative Patricia R. Bellock, Co-Chair

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cc: John Schomberg, General Counsel, Office of the Governor