

# *Logan Correctional* *Center*

*Public Comments related to Facility  
Closure*

As of 6/17/2024

Rheannon Frost  
Logan Correctional Center  
Mental Health Staff Assistant  
Written Statement  
[Rheannon94@gmail.com](mailto:Rheannon94@gmail.com)

Hello,

As a contracted employee through Wexford Health and having my husband be a correctional officer here at Logan Correctional Center, the potential closure of this facility will cause great financial strain on our family. We as a couple worked very hard to achieve our goals and be employed out here at Logan Correctional Center knowing that it was the best paying job with outstanding benefits in Logan County and without having to commute. The convenience of being able to work without a commute provides us more time to spend with our two daughters. The idea that those who currently work at Logan Correctional Center can simply commute to the new facility if it is built up north is in my opinion, ridiculous. This would be taking hours of time away from our family just to commute for our jobs. The thought of having to sell our house and relocate does not sit well either. The northern part of Illinois is much more expensive than central Illinois and we would not be able to afford the same “luxuries” we have here. We bought a beautiful 3 bedroom, 2 and half bath home here in Lincoln 3 years ago for a fraction of what it would cost to move up north, we would also be having to move away from our families who help with watching our children daily. This would cause us to have to pay for childcare, which again, is expensive on its own. We have fought so hard to achieve our goal of being able to build ourselves up financially to provide a great life for our daughters, and the thought of this facility closing has put so much unease into our lives. There are very few jobs that offer the same pay range that working at Logan Correctional Center does. Our hope is that you will realize that closing this facility will cause this same kind of financial strain on hundreds of employees here in Logan County and will cause a severe negative economic impact for Lincoln/Logan County. We are centrally located in Illinois, this offers the families that live in southern Illinois of those that are incarcerated here, less hours of having to travel to visit. It also reduces the amount of time spent on writs/court furloughs for the individuals and employees that must escort them. If this facility were to close and be relocated to the northern part of Illinois, it would cause increased drive times for the people who have to travel from southern Illinois for visits, and increase the amount of time individuals are out on writs/court furloughs, which will cause increased overtime potential for those correctional officers that have to drive from northern Illinois to southern Illinois for these individuals that have to go to southern Illinois for any writ/court furlough. Again, I hope that you and the other politicians of Illinois, will see the need of keeping this facility open and rebuilding here in Logan County.

The proposed closure of the Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln will have a significant economic impact on the community and region. An April 2024 Economic Impact Study shows the direct job loss of 493 employees will trigger an additional induced loss of 57 jobs and a cumulative loss of \$38,563,952 in labor income to the region. The cumulative output value shows

an overall loss to the region of \$51,989,365 (value added and intermediate expenditures) as an economic impact. The overall projected economic impact of the facility closure totals more than \$61 million, largely due to additional losses in county, state, and federal taxes, an impact of \$9,575,108.

As you are aware, Logan County has had several economic challenges over the last several years. The closing of Lincoln College (estimated annual economic impact of \$51 million) and Lincoln Christian University has impacted our economy through the loss of revenue generated by both institutions from outside sources. Closing Logan Correctional Center will reach far beyond those employed at the facility – the effect will ripple through our community at the cost of an additional 57 jobs. While relocating this facility to a different county may be a zero-sum job loss to the state of Illinois, that cannot be said of the impact on Logan County or the Central Illinois region.

In Logan County, we face many economic challenges. Rebuild Logan Correctional Center at its current location in Logan County and show that you support growth and prosperity in every Illinois county.

Thank you

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Besides all the employees that work at the facility currently the closure would affect far more for the area. Local pharmacies fill prescriptions when needed, people visit the area, hotels and restaurants will be affected. Logan county don't have much offer for residents, visitors or travelers. Logan county will be vanished if this were to happen, what is actually in the area to offer the people around this area. People will start moving out of state, to find better pay, less taxes, and more that is offered. Please keep Logan county intact.

Kelli Allison

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Paws Giving Independence NFP located in Peoria has their service dog training program through Logan Correctional, Helping Paws. Helping Paws and donations allows Paws Giving Independence to place service animals for free to recipients. I am a service dog recipient from Helping Paws and Paws Giving Independence NFP. With my service dog, Ace, I am enabled. I would like to see Helping Paws continue enabling people in our community during any new construction. Of course then, to continue afterwards.

C David Ross

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Paw giving independence and logan dog trainer providing Free service dogs to the local community. These ladies are essential in keeping this non profit organization with their support. Furthermore, I believe it not only helps the dogs but the ladies in prison. Dogs teach compassion and I think this is essentially benifits the women in logan not only in behavior but learning to care for something 24 hours a day.

Kevin Collins

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Good Day.

I would like to voice my opinion on the closing of the Logan County Correctional Facility. I first would like to start off by saying I am a very concerned citizen of the city of lincoln, IL. The closing of this facility would do more harm than good. These officers and other staff are our neighbors and for some loved ones. We care very much for their well being and this will affect them more than you think. Some of them can not just up and relocate and not only that some of them have given years of service not only to the state of Illinois and that facility but to their community and you want them to give that up and for what? I'm all about justice reform but closing one facility to build another is not going to solve anything. Also I would like to bring up the impact it would have on a already struggling town like lincoln. It is not easy living here with most jobs being low wages. The best places for a job here is Eaton, Lincoln Corrections, and yes even Logan County Corrections. Also won't just impact the city but the county as well, with the revenue it will lose. I see this move as another thing that this state is doing to degrade and bankrupt the more southern portions of the state and believe that if this is allowed it will prove that even more.

In conclusion I am opposed to the closing of the Logan County corrections facility.

Sincerely

Collin Hall

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To Whom It May Concern:

I currently have a facility dog that was trained in the Helping Paws Program and feel like this is not only a way for the inmates to give back and have purpose but it also trains amazing dogs



who work in the community. Marshall is my facility dog trained at Logan Correctional Center and he interacts daily with 300 students and staff. In his training with the women at the correctional center he was well prepared and ready to help students with self regulation, feeling identification, empathy, problem solving, gratitude and a help provide a positive climate at school. I work in a Title 1 school and have utilized Marshall's specialty training to diffuse and de-escalate behavior issues and he is also a great reward for students. The women at Logan Correctional facility provide an invaluable service and skill set. Marshall is successful in his job because of their skill, dedication and love for animals. I applaud them for using their time while incarcerated to help and give back to the community. I am a concerned citizen and advocate for the Helping Paws program.

Thank you--

Mrs. Emily McCormick

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Dear Members of the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I am writing to you with a heavy heart and a deep sense of urgency regarding the impending decision to close/relocate Logan Correctional Center. As a dedicated employee and member of the community, I implore you to reconsider this course of action and to recognize the profound ramifications it will have on both my family and our broader community. Logan Correctional Center is a vital cornerstone of our community. Its closure would not only mean the loss of jobs for myself and my colleagues but also the erosion of the economic stability that our families rely on.

The closure of Logan Correctional Center would have immediate and devastating consequences for the families of its employees. Many of us rely solely on the income we earn here to provide for our loved ones. Specifically, I use the income I receive through my employment to help provide an easier and fulfilling retirement for my great grandparents. I am not only their soul caretaker but also their power of attorney. They rely on me to handle many of the important decisions still left in their day-to-day lives. A successful attempt at the closure and relocation of my facility would force me to make an ultimate decision; follow my job and make providing care to my grandparents more difficult or look for different job opportunities within the area of which I am already in so that my current level of care can be continued.

Logan Correctional Center plays a crucial role in the local economy, supporting numerous businesses and services in the area. Its closure would lead to a domino effect, causing a decline in local spending, loss of revenue for local businesses, and ultimately, a

stagnation of economic growth. This, in turn, would exacerbate poverty and inequality within our community, creating a cycle of hardship that would be difficult to break.

Beyond its economic impact, Logan Correctional Center is an integral part of the social fabric of our community. Logan County has always been a vital backbone of the state's law enforcement outreach specifically for the Department of Corrections; we are the only county in the state to at one time house individuals in custody of both male, female, trans male, trans female, and and soon to be youth. Without the hard work and dedication of the people of Logan County, the Department of Corrections would not have been able to provide the level of care to its individuals in custody that it has for the last few decades. Its closure would not only result in the loss of jobs but also the loss of a sense of belonging and identity for many members of our community. The social bonds that have been forged within its walls would be severed, leaving a void that cannot easily be filled.

I understand that tough decisions must be made in the interest of fiscal responsibility and long-term planning. No staff member nor individual in custody can disagree with the state's point about Logan's failing infrastructure and unsafe environment. However, I urge you to consider the alternative solution that has been proposed not only by our local union but by many of the members of our community. Logan Correctional Center can be rebuilt at its current location. This alternative solution would not only accomplish the mission put forward by the Department of Corrections and your organization but would also create the smoothest transition not only for the staff but for those in custody at our facility. I believe that with collaboration and creativity, we can find a way to preserve this valuable asset and safeguard the well-being of our families and community.

In closing, I implore you to weigh the human cost of your decision and to recognize the profound impact that the closure of Logan Correctional Center would have on the lives of countless individuals. I urge you to choose compassion over austerity, and to stand with us in ensuring a brighter and more prosperous future for all.

Sincerely,  
Blake Utterback  
Correctional Food Service Supervisor 1  
Logan Correctional Center

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I understand that some people may want it to move but you don't understand or don't care about how much of an impact it will have on our families that work here at Logan. It isn't just a simple

relocate or retrain for something else. This time is very stressful with the unknowing of what could or will happen eventually. You don't understand how many younger COs are out here with me, and not many are at the age of retiring. I have been here almost 10 years now, and not at an age to retire. I get moving to another facility is fine and dandy until it takes a toll on our spouses and our children for those of my coworkers who have them. Myself included in that having 3 young children and a wife at home. It's not that easy!! You don't understand or don't care how much of an impact it is going to take on Logan County if it does move! So, before you say move it. Reflect on how much it's going to impact those families that must relocate or even travel to another facility that's hours away and take away from their families in the process of them not being there. We need to take in account of how many families it's going to impact deeply if Logan does close and relocates. My family has lived in Logan County for almost 8 years now and love how close our community is and how we all pull together when families are in need. There are several of my fellow COs that live within Logan County that this will impact and disrupt their families and way of living. We have made a way of living and laid roots down deep here in Logan County and relocating isn't an option for my family. We have friends and family here; uprooting and moving hours away would be detrimental with how close everyone is.

Thank you  
Mark Johnson  
309-838-5192

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Greetings:

My name is Eric McNamara. I am a 20 year veteran of the department of corrections. I am currently working as a correctional lieutenant, at Logan Correctional Center. Prior to working at Logan CC, I worked 9 years at Dwight Correctional Center. I have spent my entire career within IDOC, working with the population at Logan CC.

I started my career on January 5, 2004, at Dwight Correctional Center. On April 1, 2013, I started my first day at Logan CC. I was able to witness firsthand, the damage of closing a facility. Between 2013 and 2018, our staff assaults at Logan Correctional Center rose exponentially. This was mostly caused, by the staff at Logan CC not knowing how to work with the female population. Working with the female population, is the most challenging position in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

After a decade at Logan Correctional Center, I can say the inmate population is finally settled in. Our staff assaults have drastically dropped, these past 6 years. This is mostly due to our staff finally being trained on how to manage the female population. If we close Logan CC and ship them up north to Stateville, this will be ten times worse than 2013. I can verify that most of our staff, will not follow the population to Stateville CC. I fear for the safety of staff, and the individuals in custody.

PLEASE consider building Logan CC, on the grounds within Logan County. No staff within IDOC can manage this population, like the staff at Logan Correctional Center can.

Thanks for listening.

Eric McNamara  
Correctional Lieutenant  
Local 2073 Treasurer

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Hello. My name is Chris Slaby. I am a resident of Lincoln, Illinois writing in opposition to the plan to relocate Logan Correctional Center to Will County.

There is the notion that current employees will be able to find employment elsewhere with the Illinois Department of Corrections. While Decatur Correctional Center is a 45-minute, one-way commute (the same commute time I myself make for a job in a different field and city), other opportunities listed - Taylorville, Jacksonville, and Pontiac, to name a few - are well outside that driving radius. Countless studies suggest commutes should not be longer than 20-30 miles. The relocation of Logan Correctional Center would place an impossible choice on current Logan employees: endure a far-too long commute and sacrifice time with families and loved ones for work, or uproot their family - and ties to their community - to relocate for another employment opportunity.

In just the past few years, Lincoln has lost two higher education institutions and the city's literal main grocery store, Kroger. To remove this key employer from Lincoln would be akin to kicking a proverbial dog while it is down.

To be clear: the current iteration of Logan Correctional Center must be shuttered and replaced. The current facility is outdated and in deplorable. If investment is going to be made in the

facility, building new IS the appropriate course of action. However, it is an inappropriate course of action to relocate an employer of more than 500 well-paying jobs from a county with a population of less than 28,000 people, to a county of about 700,000 people that is part of the third-largest metropolitan area in the United States.

Ever since the current Governor was inaugurated in 2019, he - and members of the General Assembly - have focused their messaging on creating equitable opportunities for everyone across Illinois. This is a message I have wholeheartedly agreed with since day one. However, relocating Logan Correctional Center would be a stout contradiction of that message and moral stance. Do the right thing and keep Logan Correctional Center in Logan County.

Yours Truly,

Chris Slaby

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Hello, I am the MHDON at Logan CC, I have worked at this prison for 6 years and most of that time was as a floor nurse. I am very confused why the plan for this prison is to move it to Will county. Let me tell you about my prison. We are the biggest mental health facility in the state of Illinois, out of the 1100 females we have her about 900 of them are on our case load. Mental health here has many levels and some of these individuals are very sick. We are the only female intake unit and if it is moved so far north it would be impossible for southern counties to transfer the females to court or to the prison and back within a shift. This would impact visits for some of them, d/t it would make it hard for families to travel so far to see their daughter, their sister or mother. What about the pregnant offenders, would it affect them being able to see their babies and families picking up their breast milk. It would definitely affect any bonding time they would have and family time that our females have with their kids during family weekends. We have about 36 mental health staff that would loose their jobs, not to mention that the government would have to come up with replacements and get them trained to deal with this population. Our officers have special training to deal with them also. Last but not least the affect the move would have on Logan county and staff that come to work every day and work diligently to take care of these females and try to get them to learn coping skills and the hope that they will learn enough to be able to leave this prison one day and not come back.

Thank you for you consideration  
Darlene Henrikson

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I, Trevor Pinkley, have worked at Logan Correctional Center for 9 years as a corrections officer. In my time here at Logan I believe I have had a good impact with staff members and individuals in custody both. Some may say that working with the woman individuals is much harder than dealing with men. The staff here are use to working with our population and have developed repours with these individuals. I believe moving Logan Correctional Center north of Lincoln, IL will have a huge impact on not only staff members but the individuals in custody that live here day in and day out. If the facility is moved that far away there would be very little amount of staff, if any, that would remain working with our current population. I do not believe the people calling the shots for the move have any idea how bad this could go for our entire population to be relocated hours north from Lincoln, IL and also to try and reacclimate a new location away from their families but also learning and dealing with new staff members that they do not know. The female individuals in custody highly rely on consistency and authority that they can look up to. They have school teachers, bosses in theirs jobs, and direct supervising staff that they know they can go to if they have problems because they have established a repour with those staff members. How does the governor's office think the population will react to dealing with all new staff? This will also displace many if not more than 75% of the population from their families that come to visit them. How can the governor's office claim they are not getting adequate treatment at Logan CC when they have more than double the counseling staff and mental health staff in the 9 years I've worked here. How does the governor's office plan to staff this facility in Crest Hill when they cannot staff Stateville currently? I don't see how they will have more to offer by making this move.

I believe the closure of Logan CC will have a very negative impact on staff members. This will force many staff to have to travel further than they already do for work. It could force many staff members and their families to have to relocate to a closer city where they would be making a transfer to a new facility. Many staff members already have moved to the surrounding areas of Logan CC upon accepting their jobs here. This will affect almost 500 employees. Some employees may take significant pay cuts just to keep a job if there's cannot be replaced or if they are unable to travel up to 90 miles one way just to keep their current job. It really destroys the morale at a facility when you are told they are going to relocate your job at any given point and leave you with a million questions for your future.

I believe there is no reason that Logan CC cannot be rebuilt on the grounds it sits on currently. Half the facility is currently closed or under construction. There is no reason it couldn't be rebuilt right now, right here.

Trevor Pinkley  
Logan Correction Center  
Correctional Officer

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It is in the best interest of all parties for the new women's correctional facility to be built in Logan County.

First, there is one maximum security facility in the state of Illinois that also houses individuals who are not eligible to be housed at Decatur Correctional Center. This facility needs to be centrally located for transporting people in custody to the facility for intake processing and from the facility various court and medical writs. Transportation and staffing cost will increase dramatically if the women's correctional facility is moved to northern Illinois. Overtime, vehicle upkeep, gas costs will add up quickly. These costs will be passed on to individual counties who have county jail staff and parole officers transport individuals to the women's facility for intake processing. Many of the southern counties are small and the additional costs for transporting individuals an additional 100 miles one way will be detrimental.

Second, many of the people housed at Logan Correctional Center are parents of minor children and have families. Having a centrally located facility helps families keep connected to people in custody. A primary factor of resilience is family support. People are more likely to prioritize their family when they can see them in-person which will encourage positive change. Most women in custody will be discharged to the community. Maintaining family relationships reduces recidivism because individuals in custody have people to come home to. Safety at the facility improves from the individuals keeping family connections with in-person visits because people are motivated to engage in pro-social behavior at the facility when they depend on visits and are held accountable for their actions by family members. The families of the people in custody and DCFS and agency social workers in their counties will also incur the staffing and transportation costs if the women's facility is moved to a northern county. For families that have DCFS involvement, children are mandated to have in-person visits each month. The additional travel time will be more difficult emotionally and logistically as children may miss days of school or other enriching activities to travel for 14 hours to see their parent for a 4-hour visit.

Third, Logan Correctional Center is a significant employer that benefits Logan and surrounding counties. I like working at Logan and working with women in custody. I, and many of my coworkers cannot travel more than 1 hour to and from work. And many of us do not want to relocate. I enjoy living in my community. My paycheck goes much farther here

than it will in an area where the cost of living is higher. In addition to the comradery of staff that Logan, correctional staff, other IDOC staff, substance treatment counselors, mental health and medical staff work at Logan because the wage is very good for this area. People that work at Logan live in and spend their money in these smaller communities. Local businesses benefit from people that work here and people that travel here to meet with individuals in custody.

Please rebuild the women's facility at Logan. Moving the women's correctional facility farther north will be a financial burden to the state, counties, social service agencies, and employees at Logan. Rebuilding Logan in a northern county will irreparably damage Illinois women, children, and families, Lincoln township, and surrounding communities. The State has invested in keeping good employers in central Illinois by giving millions of dollars in incentives to Rivian and Ferrero to stay in Bloomington and expand their facilities. Keeping Logan Correctional Center in Logan County is an opportunity for the state to invest in the families and smaller communities in central and southern Illinois.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janeen Wright, LCPC

Corrections Assessment Specialist

Logan Correctional Center

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I am strongly advocating for Logan CC to NOT be relocated up north to Will County. Logan CC offers multiple employment opportunities to so many individuals in Logan County and the surrounding counties. Moving the facility up north will greatly impact these jobs and hurt many families that will be affected by this closure.

Logan CC offers many services to the individuals in custody while they are incarcerated. I am a mental health professional for Logan CC, and I assist my patients with processing their traumas, crimes, helping them with achieving their goals, and helping to set them up for success once they are released. Mental health is very important for these individuals, and we have a big mental health staff here at Logan who would also be affected by this closure. If the facility were to relocate up north, that would be a 3+ hour commute which no one would be willing to accommodate. Our staff would be forced to relocate elsewhere to another facility (and hope they have positions available) or apply to a whole new type of employment altogether.

Logan is currently housing 1,000+ individuals and these individuals benefit greatly when it comes to Logan being centrally located. This allows their families to be able to visit them frequently and they do not have to commute many miles to see their loved ones. Being centrally located also helps parents be able to visit with their kids more often if they are



involved with DCFS. Being centrally located in the middle of Bloomington, Springfield, Peoria, and Champaign-Urbana is extremely helpful due to the number of resources readily available to the individuals in custody.

The population of Logan CC is so diverse. We have many different treatment units. We have intake and receiving, a residential treatment unit for those that are unable to care for themselves on their own, a crisis watch unit for those who are struggling with suicidal ideations/self-harm, a substance abuse treatment program, schooling, employment opportunities for the individuals in custody, transgender services, as well as many other services.

I would greatly consider you listen to the staff here at Logan CC and the COMMUNITY of Logan County and the surrounding counties and how this closure would greatly affect the community and the morale of individuals.

**Shannon Kennedy, LSW**

Qualified Mental Health Professional – HU6  
Wexford Health Sources, Inc.  
Logan Correctional Center  
(217) 735-5581 | Ext. 3428  
Work Schedule: Sun-Thu 8am-4pm

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I started my career with IDOC in 2011. We were a men's facility at the time. Two years later we got the females from Dwight C.C. and Lincoln C.C. The process was pure chaos. No one had a plan and Logan had no idea what we were getting ourselves into. The next 4 to 5 years were, by far, the most challenging work environment. Massive turnover rates, staff assaults, mandates every shift. We, as Logan staff, have sacrificed A LOT of time away from our family. But we have stepped up to the challenge and made the best of it. We have learned to work together. We have stood by each other. We have protected each other. We have had each other's back.

If you have never worked with the female population, you must know that it is not for everyone. You must have patience. You do not adapt to this type of environment overnight. I've been in this department for 13 years now, 11 years with the female population and I am still learning every day. Luckily, I have established respect with majority of the female individuals in custody and do not plan on working with anybody else for the remainder of my career with IDOC. This is why I trust the staff that I work with because we have experienced every situation together. We have broken-up individual in custody fights. We have cut pieces of string off countless individual in custody's necks because they didn't want to live anymore. We've performed CPR

to bring them back. We have dealt with the suicides because they felt they had no other choice and checked on each other days after to make sure we are coping. We have saved an individual in custody from slicing their neck open with a razor blade. We have fought an individual in custody who had a shank in their hand because moments before that, they sliced and injured our brother up. We have stopped an individual in custody from stabbing themselves in the leg with a light bulb. We have been on numerous medical writs where we have fought a severely mentally ill individual in custody to get proper health care treatment after she just broke her neck from jumping off the sink in her cell. All these situations and many, many more have made us stronger and better to work with these females.

In 2013, I began my relationship with my husband. We got married in 2017. We started the process of expanding our family in 2018. Once that year went by, we were told we needed to start doing fertility treatments. We have been going through fertility treatments the past 5 years. For the next 3 years we would try fertility treatments in Springfield IL. We went through 8 IUI's and a failed attempt at IVF. In 2022, we moved our fertility treatments to St. Louis. In January of 2023, we got pregnant but only to lose our baby in March 2023. I got pregnant again in October 2023 and am currently 32 weeks pregnant. This will be my first child and will not be my last as I plan on having more kids. I need to be close to my fertility clinic and I choose my family first. I will raise my family in Logan County as I have with my stepchildren.

Ashley Ulery

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My name is Michael Conley I have been a correctional officer at Logan CC for the last five years. I urge you to NOT rebuild Logan CC in Crest Hill, IL. My wife, three children, and I moved to Lincoln eight years ago from east central Illinois. We have developed our family roots here in Lincoln. My kids are now 15, 12, and 10. None of us want to have to relocate and I sure don't want to have to drive 3 hours every day just to get to my job and back home. The relocation of the prison would have devastating effects to the local economy of Logan County and surrounding areas. I'm not sure what the governor and his team are thinking when they plan to move the CENTRAL and ONLY reception for the female individual population to the northern part of the state. There are logistical reasons why we are located in Logan County. Moving the facility north would mean southern counties would have to drive that much further to bring intakes and the officers at said facility would have to travel that distance as well for writs and furloughs. I once again urge you for a smooth transition keep Logan Correctional Center in Logan County!

Thanks,

Michael Conley

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To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Craig W Bean and I am currently a Correctional Sergeant at Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln Illinois. I am married with three children who live at home, and one that lives within five minutes of my house in Lincoln. I also have two grandchildren whom my wife watches and on my days off I also watch them. I am an active member in my community, volunteering with my local church, Lincoln Area Youth Wrestling, Lincoln Community High School Wrestling, the Local VFW, and I am the Assistant Wrestling Coach at Lincoln Junior High School.

Recently we were notified that Logan Correctional Center will be closing and it is the intention of the State to re-build it in Will County which is 129 miles from Logan County and almost a two hour drive. I have been employed by the Department of Corrections for five years. Before that I was a Shift Supervisor at a Glass Manufacturing Plant in Lincoln which unfortunately closed, and for the 21 years before that I was in the United States Navy. I have traveled all over the world and lived all over the United States and chose to retire in Illinois.

Five years ago when the Glass Manufacturing Plant closed, I was given the opportunity to transfer with the company which I turned down. There were several reasons that I did this. The biggest reason that I did not transfer was my family. The 21 years I was in the United States Navy I moved every three to five years. My wife and kids were settled in Lincoln and we were finally able to buy our own home. My children had made friends that they would not have to leave, my wife was involved in the community and we all found a church that we were excited to go to. When I turned down this transfer and took a job with the Department of Corrections I

took a 55% pay cut . I had to cash out multiple 401k's just to make ends meet until I was able to graduate the Corrections Academy and start getting paid. Even with the pay cut it was worth it to see my wife and kids happy.

Now five years later I am forced to make this decision again. I have a few options with my career in the Department of Corrections. First, do I sell my house and move two hours away? This is not a viable option due to the housing market and my family being settled in Logan County. Second is do I take a Voluntary Reduction back to Corrections Officer so I can transfer to a facility close to Logan County? As a Correctional Sergeant I am near the bottom of Seniority, but as Corrections Officer I am in the top 50%. The third option is to just leave the Department of Corrections all together. I do not want to do this at all. I am nearly 47 years old and I do not want to "start over" again. I enjoy coming to work every day. The challenges of dealing with the incarcerated female population are new and different every day which makes this job exciting.

The closing of Logan Correctional Center and moving it out of Logan County will not only affect me and my family but it will also affect the nearly 500 other staff that work at Logan Correctional Center, from Security Staff to the many Non-Security Staff that are employed here. This will also have a major impact on the community. There are staff that work at Logan Correctional Center from the surrounding counties, not just Logan County. However, Logan County will take the biggest hit. The revenue that is generated from the staff purchasing food at the local restaurants, or snacks and gas at the local gas stations. Logan County has taken a huge hit in the last five years. First as I stated earlier with the closing of the Glass Manufacturing plant which was first opened in 1942, then Lincoln College closed after 157 years and then Lincoln Christian University after 78 years. We do not need to lose another employer in Logan County!

So in conclusion I am opposed to the closing of Logan Correctional Center and moving it to Will County.

I would be willing to provide oral testimony at any hearing related to the closure of Logan Correctional Center.

Very Respectfully,

Craig W Bean  
1608 North Union Street  
Lincoln, Illinois 62656  
(309) 716-5752 (cell)

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To whom it may concern,

It saddens me to have to be in a position where I am going to lose my Job as a Substance abuse counselor at Logan CC. I am a contractual worker and I have no options to transfer to another WestCare program as there are no positions available to work with women, except for over 2 hours away from where I live. I live in Lincoln, and my entire family lives in Lincoln, so relocation would be hard. I am a family-oriented person and I love being live close to my family and having a job that is close to my family so I can support them. I have lived in Lincoln Illinois for the past 24 years. I became a Substance abuse counselor in 2014. I love my job and the ability to help women in prison become rehabilitated before they are released.

I work closely with the women every day to help them with their drug abuse problems as well as other mental health problems related to their addiction. I work with them to help them change their behaviors and other ways of thinking so they can go out and be productive members in society. The program currently has 130 individuals in custody that are working on bettering themselves. All the women in the program currently are very angry that they are being forced to go to Decatur Correctional center if they are Minimum security because majority of them are in school, work or are in the program so they are receiving credit for time off their sentences. The Individuals in custody would rather remain in Logan CC to receive time off their sentence and go home sooner to their families. They do not want to be forced to go to a different facility that is further away from their families. They are also very angry that they are been removed for programs to help them better themselves and are taken Decatur Correctional Center, which does not offer a general substance abuse program, the only substance abuse program they have currently is a 26 bed Dual diagnosis/substance abuse program for the woman and the wait list can take over a year to get them in. The individuals in custody are not being allowed to complete the treatment that they are currently in before being moved to Decatur, so they are having to start over again. If you really think about it, keeping the women at Logan CC, that are in treatment currently or are on the waitlist would help the state save money in the long run because those individuals are earning time off their sentence and would cost the state less money remaining at Logan and getting out sooner instead of going to Decatur CC and remaining incarcerated and costing the state more.

The Loss of Logan CC in Lincoln puts a strain of everyone. Women(Individuals in custody) need a Prison in a central location because a lot of our female population have family down south and it makes it easier for everyone to visit their loved ones in prison. It would allow families located all around the state of IL to visit their loved ones easier. Lincoln, IL is a nice small town and the loss of Lincoln College(university), and Lincoln Christian University have already negatively impacted the Logan County community and people have had to move out of town to find jobs because of the closures of those schools. Please Rebuild Logan Correctional Center in Logan County. It would be the best for all parties involved. Let's not make things

political and force a Prison to be built closer to Chicago, IL due to political reasons. Illinois needs more woman's resources in the central and southern areas anyway, so why not Instead of building a woman's prison where there are prisons and resources available already, why don't we create more resources throughout the state in communities where they are lacking and building the prison in Logan County, a central location would help the southern and central communities. Doing this would offer all different types of employment opportunities as well as resources for individuals in custody.

If Logan Correction Center is not rebuilt in Logan County, I will be forced to move out of Lincoln, find another job that would be entry level and must relocate my family and that is not okay. All Staff currently positioned at Logan Correctional center are trained and work within the facility now in the Logan County area. All staff live in the central surrounding towns that are close to Logan County or they live in Logan County, if you relocate the building site of the prison to Will County, you will have to train new staff and contract new staff for programs in that area. It makes more sense to just rebuild in Logan County and just transfer the staff already trained and working in the institution. It would be better for everyone to keep Logan Correction center in Logan County, so please look and listen to what all staff, families of staff, and individuals in custody are saying and do not move the location of Logan Correctional Center. Keep the prison in Logan County!

Sincerely,  
Glodonna Trimby

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Meredith Jones and I have been employed with the Illinois Department of corrections for over 13 years. The majority of that time has been at Logan, with all of my time being served in Logan county. I want to strongly urge you all to keep this facility in the central Illinois area. This closure will destroy the economy of Lincoln and surrounding areas. This area has built its structure around the prison and the business that it brings to town. From lodging the visiting families in hotels, feeding them at restaurants, providing medical care to those in custody at the hospitals, and providing jobs to locals inside the prison as security and support staff. This closure will not only effect the town, and the surrounding area, but it will negatively impact the individuals in custody and the many employees at Logan. I myself will have to either completely leave the department or take a voluntary reduction in pay because my job title is so few and far between throughout the state. There are currently only three vacancies for my title in the state, 2 of which are in Vienna and Centralia. This only accounts for myself not the CU-500 bargaining unit, there are dozens more that will likely have to either leave the

department or take a huge cut in pay just to keep their jobs. We are all tax payers and constituents that have a voice that should count in this matter, and we are being overlooked and being played as pawns in a political cash grab. This will also greatly negatively effect the female population currently housed at Logan. When Dwight closed in 2013 the percentage of individual on staff assaults, individual on individual assaults, and suicide attempts sky rocketed. It took many years for them to begin to feel comfortable with the staff and their surroundings again. If this population is forced to move again, 2013 will repeat itself once again. There will not be any familiar staff or surroundings. It is our duty to keep them safe and secure, why would we put this population through this all over again? At this point 69% of our population resides in counties south of Interstate 80. These women have children and families that already travel upwards of 3 to 4 hours just to visit with their family members if they are coming from counties such as Alexander. The vast majority of our population is from central and southern Illinois, why would we move this population to Joliet, where there are already 2 facilities that critically struggle to hire and maintain the staffing levels needed to run a safe and secure prison? Those working at Logan will not be making that commute. Furthermore, this population is very unique not only being female, but multi-level security, extremely mentally ill, and the transgender community as well. The staff who have worked here with this population are very in tune with and proficient with trauma informed care practices. This isn't something that a 1 hour state sponsored training can teach you, this takes years of practice and interaction with this population. These women have gained a sense of trust with Logan staff and their surroundings. Removing them from that is not only cruel, but also dangerous.

*Thank you,*

**Meredith Jones**  
**Casework Supervisor R&C**  
**Logan Correctional Center | Lincoln, Illinois**

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Dear Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability:

My name is Lisa Dial a Correctional Sergeant at Logan Correctional Center.

I am submitting on the closure of Logan Correctional Center. I feel that the facility should be kept in Logan County. It is centrally located for all business that is conducted on a daily basis at this facility. It would cause significant downfall in the economy of Logan County.

I have worked at this facility 21 years and seen the impact on the individuals in custody when

They were moved here when Dwight Correctional Center closed. It was very hard on individuals and employees' when this happened. It takes special training to handle women who are incarcerated and the Mentally Ill individuals in custody. We did not have all the training we needed when this happened and it was catastrophic to us and the individuals in custody. Many of these individuals would not wish to go through this again. Please take my letter in consideration.

Thank you,  
Sgt. Lisa Dial

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To whom it may concern,

I have worked for the Illinois Department of Corrections for 5 years. If you move Logan to Statesville it will negatively effect my family in more ways than one. This job helps to support me and my Fiancé. Between my fiancé and myself we have 5 kids. This job has provided us the opportunity to be able to do just a little bit extra each month with the kids. It also allows us to be able to put food on the table and a roof over our head. My daughter also attends school in the Williamsville school district due to me living in that school district. If we would have to relocate my daughter would lose the opportunity to continue to attend that school and would have to transfer and miss out on the education and athletic possibilities that Williamsville has to offer. This job also allows me to stay close to my father. My dad is 81 now and lives 2 minutes away from me. He was diagnosed with early Alzheimer's last year and his condition is progressively getting worse. I am the only family he has that is able to take care of him. With his memory getting worse only with time. This job location allows me to stay close to my dad to be able to take him to doctor appointments and be able to check on him on a daily basis since he is right down the road. The possible relocation would drastically effect my family in an extremely negative manner. I hope you will rebuild Logan on the existing grounds. I know I am not the only one who would be impacted my this.

Sincerely,  
Andrew Lazar

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Dear Members of C.O.G.F.A or whom it may concern,

This is my written statement and stance I hold about Logan Correctional Center (C.C.). I strongly oppose the state's plan to relocate Logan C.C. to the Statesville grounds. This move would greatly negatively impact myself, my family, my co-workers, my community, and a large percentage of the individuals in custody. The current plan seems to be a political move and unsensible. Logan C.C. should stay at Logan C.C. or at least nearby.

I left another law enforcement job to start my IDOC career over 5 years ago. I have been dedicated to Logan C.C. and serving the people of Illinois at Logan C.C. for many reasons. I have made many sacrifices during these years and feel like moving the facility would be a "slap in the face" to myself and my many colleagues who have made similar, and even more sacrifices than I have. Some of my co-workers will be more hurt by this than I, as they are older and will have a much harder time finding a decent job. I serve at Logan C.C. because I want to protect my community and the state as a whole. I believe Logan County is a suitable location where many people like me are willing to continue to serve. I have stayed at Logan C.C. because it is a good job (better than most in the area) that has supported my family and ensured they are well taken care of.

If the state goes through with their plan, I will have to drastically change how I live and how I care for my family. I would have to relocate (which is not feasible), transfer to another prison, or make the choice to stay with IDOC. Transferring to another prison in central Illinois would cost my family thousands of dollars in additional travel expenses a year. I would also lose out on spending my priceless time with my precious children who do not need their dad gone any more than what is necessary. This move would be unfair to so many families and would cause undue harm to countless state employees. They rely on their long-held positions at Logan C.C. to support their families and contribute to the numerous communities in central Illinois.

The Logan County community (area businesses and local governments) cannot afford to lose out on revenue brought in by Logan C.C. and its employees. Logan C.C. employees spend A LOT of money in Lincoln and surrounding communities, just because of the location. Lincoln has lost enough economic income already! Logan County businesses in particular will suffer tremendously more from additional loss of income spent in the county and from loss of taxes brought in to support their school systems and other public services. Logan C.C. employees impact the local economy greatly, but if Logan C.C. is moved, many employees would leave their homes in search of better employment. The relocation of Logan C.C. would destabilize the local economy and disrupt IDOC operations in unforeseeable ways.

Logan C.C. has had numerous repairs within the last 10 years (and even today) and has cost the state millions of dollars. It would be a shame for all that money to have been spent in vain. Logan C.C. needs repairs still but has a lot of good infrastructure and programs already in place. I support repairing the needed infrastructure and building what is needed on the grounds of Logan C.C. Why can't the new facility be built where Logan C.C. is, even if it is half at a time? There are better options than to dislocate everyone.

Logan C.C. employees have been properly trained how to work with the female population and our staff know them (which can be a great help at managing the population and their needs). The current employees are the best suitable and qualified for the job, why try to recruit at a new location when the manpower is already present and has shown their dedication? The current facility has the appropriate resources to help Individuals in Custody recover and rehabilitate. Logan C.C. has and can still continue to help people reintegrate into Illinois communities and become productive citizens. Moving Logan C.C. up north would be harmful for Individuals in Custody as well.

Logan C.C. is centrally located for citizens to visit their loved ones while incarcerated, this is how it should stay. Moving Logan C.C. would cause great burdens for the southern counties transporting Individuals in Custody and the family members wanting to provide some support to their incarcerated friends and family during visits. Transporting Individuals in Custody by IDOC to court dates would also be a huge obstacle if they are required to attend in Southern counties. The overtime and travel expenses for that to occur would be astronomical.

Please reconsider the plan to move Logan C.C. to a place inconvenient to employees and Individuals in Custody. I urge you to keep Logan C.C. open and rebuild it in a way and place that is financially responsible. The current plan has been poorly proposed and will severely impact so many lives.

Sincerely,  
Correctional Officer Brenden Williams  
Logan Correctional Center

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Hello,

My name is Jacob R. Dixon, and I am a Lieutenant at Logan Correctional Center. I am writing to express my opposition to Logan Correctional Center closing and/or moving to the proposed location at Stateville. I feel that moving the institution that far north would be detrimental for several reasons. The first being the catastrophic economic damage it would cause Logan County and the city of Lincoln. That community has seen the closure of several community colleges and factories over the last few years. Lincoln and Logan County would be devastated by losing another mass employer in their community. Secondly, it would absolutely disenfranchise about 65-70% of the current population currently incarcerated at Logan Correctional Center from being able to visit with their families and loved ones. It would be very difficult, if not impossible for some families to make the trip that far north to visit. Some of the population at Logan Correctional Center, if moved that far north may NEVER see their loved ones again. Sadly, that is a real possibility. And lastly, perhaps, the most important reason not to close Logan Correctional Center and rebuild it at Stateville is that such a change and the reality of not seeing their loved ones on a regular basis, if at all could be devastating to the mental health of our population. There could be a significant risk of self-harm behaviors or even suicides. We are a specialized staff working within the women's division of the Illinois Department of Corrections that have been trained to manage these behaviors. I feel any changes in that area would be completely irresponsible and counterproductive.

Respectfully,

Lt. Jacob R. Dixon

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Hello, my name is Thomas Reynolds. I am a Lieutenant at Logan Correctional Center. I have been employed with the Illinois Department of Corrections since August of 2010. I am married with two children (7 and 9 years old). Moving Logan Correctional Center out of Central Illinois would greatly affect my family, the city of Lincoln, some individuals in custody at Logan Correctional Center, and myself. If Logan Correctional Center is closed and relocated anywhere other than Central Illinois there is a good chance, I will have to take a demotion to enable my children to stay with their friends at school, stay close to their grandparents, and in their many activities they participate in. Also enabling my wife to continue with her career path. Taking a demotion back to an officer would cause financial hardships at my home. If I wanted to keep my current position with the department I would more than likely have to uproot my family and relocate causing undue stress to my family. The City of Lincoln can not afford to lose anymore

jobs. The city of Lincoln has lost many jobs over the past few years, and with the relocation of Logan Correctional Center I believe many businesses would have to close. Plus, many families would have to relocate to different parts of the state. There is also a vast difference between dealing with the Male and Female individuals in custody. I have worked with both during my career with the department, and from my experience you must approach your day-to-day operations completely different. Since most of the staff currently at Logan Correctional Center will not be willing to relocate to northern Illinois. The department of corrections will have tough transitions to the new facility while the staff get new training and learn how to best relate with the female population. The staff at Logan Correctional Center in my opinion are the best equipped to enable a smooth transition to a new facility for all parties involved. Moving the facility to northern Illinois instead of staying centrally located as it is now would alienate many of the individuals in custody with family and friends from southern Illinois. The move would make it much more difficult for them to receive visitation from the family and friends which is a huge part of the individuals in custody successfully completing their served time and successfully integrating back in society. I firmly believe that the female population needs a new facility, but I can not see any good reason why it would be located anywhere but Central Illinois.

Thomas Reynolds

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Hello, my name is Erin Hamilton. I am a Dental Assistant at Logan C.C. my email is [erin.hamilton@illinois.gov](mailto:erin.hamilton@illinois.gov) . I am writing to you today to explain why it is so imperative for Logan to stay open, not just for me and my husband and family but for all the 500+ employees.

In 2019 I was a struggling hair stylist who was losing business for some unforeseen reason. I was able to secure a job at Logan as a medical records clerk right before the outbreak of covid. I thank God every day for getting the job here at Logan. If it had not been for this place and us being a necessity to work, I would not have been able to provide for my family, with no unemployment because of being a sole business owner/booth renter. I did however leave in 2021 to pursue teaching cosmetology and open my own salon. Neither unfortunately panned out and again I was in desperate need of a job. Being told EVERYONE is hiring I put in. over 50 applications for employment. After waiting 6 months for a response and just running out of unemployment guess who I got a call from?? Wexford/Logan. To rehire me back as a Dental Assistant. I cried so hard my struggle was finally over and I was back where I belong and should never have left in the first place. Logan is a family not just a job. Working here has been by far my favorite and most satisfying job I have ever had in the 26 years I've been working. I love that I get to help people and make them feel better and let them know someone does care. I care.

My husband cares. If you move Logan, you will be losing the one BHT that works the hardest and cares the most for these individuals. He makes them feel understood and safe and they know they can trust him, and they know he helps them. If you move Logan out of Lincoln these individuals will suffer a huge shock and loss of people that care about them.

My husband and I cannot afford to drive 3 hours a day to work somewhere else. We have children we care for that are in sports and other parents to consider that makes it impossible for us to move. This is the case for most of the people that work here at Logan. When I first heard the news of Logan closing, I cried. I just came back; I planned on retiring from here. I don't want to have to find another job, I'm too old to keep moving around, being a hairstylist I don't have a retirement. I am just getting it started now, how am I going to feed and cloth and house my children without this job? It was hard enough getting back on here in the first place. My husband and I rely on our jobs. As does everyone else here. Everyone here works hard. They all put in 110% every day. Some days 200%, its stressful its hot, its uncomfortable but I would not choose to work anywhere else. I LOVE LOGAN, I LOVE MY JOB, I LOVE MY WORK MATES. You are ruining so many people's lives with a flick of your pen because this won't affect you, only us. If you care at all you will not intentionally destroy 500 peoples lives and over a thousand of individuals that are incarcerated here.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this process.

Erin Hamilton

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To whom it may Concern,

My name is Michelle Davidson and I work as a Correctional Casework Supervisor at Logan Correctional Center. I am writing to file a statement on my opposition to the relocation of Logan CC.

First, I want to say that I am personally someone who cannot relocate for work. I am currently being treated for cancer and I have friends and family who live locally helping with my care. My medical care team is located in St. Louis, MO, so moving north would put me even further from them.

Secondly, I would like to talk about the impact of this relocation on other staff and individuals in custody. The majority of the counties in Illinois are located nearer to Logan than Will county. Logan is currently the only women's facility that accepts maximum security individuals. If Logan was moved to Will county, this would put additional burden on jail staff and parole officers who

transport individuals to Logan. They would be driving even further, in many cases having a far enough drive that they would be getting overtime solely due to the length of the drive. The same situation would apply for transporting women from Will county to court writs in other counties.

While moving Logan to Will county may bring more opportunity for incarcerated women who are from the Chicago area to see their families, it would do the exact opposite for incarcerated women from many other counties. In addition, women in custody would have less opportunity to see their children in DCFS custody. DCFS has difficulty providing transportation to Logan as it is. So, bringing someone's child from further away would be even more burdensome.

Part of my current job is working closely with the pregnant individuals in custody to help them potentially have the child's father or another relative attend the child's birth should it happen during incarceration. Moving Logan further away from it's current location would impact many of these families and their ability to attend the birth in person. the Moms and Babies program at Decatur CC has eligibility criteria that excludes some women from the program, so it is not an option for all pregnant individuals in custody.

Finally, I want to say that closing Logan CC at its current location would have a great impact on the surrounding community. The people who work at Logan also live in the surrounding communities and provide economic support when they shop, when they eat and when they take part in other activities in the community.

In conclusion, rebuilding Logan CC at its current site or close by would be in the best interest of the community, staff and individuals in custody.

Michelle Davidson, LCPC  
Correctional Casework Supervisor  
Logan Correctional Center

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Please do not close Logan Correctional Center. Lincoln took a tremendous hit when the Lincoln Developmental Center was closed. Our community can't stand another loss of this magnitude. Even though you see "Hiring" signs all over our community, most of these jobs are not ones that can support a growing family or provide a career with benefits for family security.

As you enter Lincoln via the first exit, you drive by the decay of the development center which has been left to ruin. Since we are on the "Route 66" history route, it is a very jarring and

painful reminder of the demise of communities like Lincoln. Lincoln needs this to remain the family community.

Sincerely,  
Linda Leslie

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I'm against the closure of Logan Correctional Center. Years of misappropriated funds and neglect from the State government has left Logan Correctional Center in its current state of rundown and disrepair. Staff and Individuals in Custody alike continue to make it known they are against moving the institution North to the new proposed location at Stateville Correctional Center. Many staff are worrying about how they will make money to feed their families and how long they may have travel to put a meal on the table. Correctional Staff/ State employees are expected to fill out paperwork highlighting the short comings and needs of repair to the institution and told we don't have the money or parts to get the things fixed.

The State wants to move the female population to Stateville Correctional Center after a rebuild. Logan Correctional Center has plenty of room for new buildings and rebuilding on current Logan Ground will cut down on the transportation costs moving individuals in Custody to a new location.

Dereck C Smith

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I've been at Logan Correctional Center for ten years. I started my career with the Illinois Department of Corrections at this facility and have been with the individuals in custody for much of their time at Logan. To be with the department and work at Logan I moved an hour from my family and friends. I have spent countless hours, days, and months, away from my family due conflict of timing when I'm able to see them. Throughout the years we have been able to come to a schedule that works for all my family. If Logan were to relocate to northern Illinois, I would have to take a demotion to be an officer to stay in my home and avoid relocation. I've work hard to become a lieutenant and I thoroughly enjoy my career; I would lose what I've gained if Logan is to be moved. Further, if I had to relocate to maintain my title, I would have to move further from my family. This would cause unnecessary stress. Having said this, the individuals in custody would be forced to move further from their families. I have spoken with several of the individuals at Logan, many of whom are from central and southern Illinois. Moving them to northern Illinois would take them away from their children and families. Logan Correctional

Center is in central Illinois which allows all the individuals to have their families be able to visit with comfort. Several of the individuals I have spoken to who were transferred from Dwight Correctional Center don't want to go through a move again. Having said this, all the individuals I've spoken to, as well as staff, agree we could use a new prison for a better living and work environment.

Lastly, let's not forget the community. Most of the staff that work at Logan Correctional Center live within a one-to-two-hour drive from the facility. We come to Logan County and shop here, eat here, at times when necessary due to working numerous hours we may stay at a hotel here. Some of us have moved to Logan County which brings profit to the county. If Logan Correctional Center were to be closed, the county will take massive loss. Being that most of the staff reside within the two drive of Logan Correctional Center, other areas will be affected by the closure as well. Once again, Logan could use a new face but relocating the prison to the northern part of the state will negatively affect the individuals in custody, the staff and the surrounding communities.

Jennifer Singer

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To Whom it May Concern,

My name is John Tierney, I am a 23-year Veteran of I.D.O.C. and I currently work at Logan Correctional Center. I am **Opposed** to the closure of Logan and the relocation to Northern Illinois. Relocating Logan prison would have significant ripple effects across various aspects of the local community and the lives of many individuals. The economic impact on Logan County, as well as the personal and logistical challenges for employees and families, cannot be overlooked. Additionally, the transportation logistics for individuals in custody and their visiting family members pose substantial challenges that must be carefully considered in this decision-making process.

First off, the impact on employees and their families is a critical aspect that needs to be carefully considered. In the 15 March 2024, press release it states that Governor JB Pritzker "is committed to continuing to rebuild and strengthen our state's infrastructure." Infrastructure is defined as the basic physical systems of a business, region or nation that often provides the production of public goods or production processes. Within the last two years both Lincoln Christian University and Lincoln College has been shut down. Losing another major employer would be devastating to the community. Why can't it be rebuilt in its current location to strengthen the Central Illinois infrastructure?



Displacing/relocating an entire workforce, many of whom are likely have deep roots in the surrounding communities, would not only disrupt their livelihoods but also have broader implications for local economies, schools, and businesses. The prospect of uprooting families and relocating them to a different area can be incredibly challenging, both emotionally and practically. Balancing work and family life is already a challenge, and the prospect of becoming a weekend parent due to logistical constraints adds an extra layer of difficulty. Being present for important family activities and milestones is crucial for maintaining strong bonds and relationships. My wife's job requires that she live within commuting distance from Springfield, IL. It's crucial for decision-makers to understand the personal sacrifices and hardships that such a relocation would impose on employees and their families. It is unjust to ask employees to make such significant sacrifices. Decision-makers need to recognize the human cost of their decisions and consider alternative solutions that don't place such burden on employees and their families.

As far as the impact on my family and I will depend on a lot of "what if". I have had a diverse and accomplished career within the I.D.O.C I was an Officer for eighteen years, a Sergeant for over four years, and I am currently a B of I Tech (Bureau of Identification Technician). However, the potential relocation of Logan prison could have a negative impact on my career progression and professional development; not to mention there are only so many B of I spots within the State. If the women's prison were to move to Crest Hill, would the new facility retain a female R&C? Would the Logan B of I office transfer with the relocation or would we have priority placement to a new B of I position within the state? Will I be allowed to go back to my last certified title which was Sergeant? The implications of travel, accommodations, meals will add up quickly, especially if commuting and maintaining a separate residence.

Keeping a centrally located R&C facilities make the most logistical sense. Chestnut, Illinois is the Geographic Center of Illinois, which is 20 miles from the current Logan facility. Why move a facility that is already centrally located within the state? The logistics of transporting Individuals in Custody from their commuting Counties to a Northern facility would be immense. For instance, the distance and time required for travel, especially for County Sheriffs coming from Southern Illinois Counties to the R&C facility up north could be a 4 to 6 hours one way trip. That's an entire shift for one Deputy to travel round trip from one end of the state to the other and back again. This is not only a logistical nightmare but a safety concern as well.

Lastly, and probably most important to the political parties is the impact of moving Logan C.C. to Northern Illinois. Our current population of Individuals in Custody at Logan is comprised of more than 60% from Central and Southern Illinois. For years there has been transportation coordinated for northern families to visit the centrally located facility but nothing for the southern

families. Now you're asking many poverty-stricken families to travel 6-10 hours just to visit their Individuals in Custody.

Recommendation: Keep Logan C.C. is in desperate need of renovation. Our facility is already centrally located on state ground. We are set up like two city blocks, a high side, and a low side. They could close the high side off while the low side continues operations and teardown and make the needed infrastructure repairs and erect 2-3 X, or K style housing units that would double our space. Once the high side is complete the same could be done to the low side. This would meet the needs of the administration and the current employees of Logan C.C.

John Tierney

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My husband has dedicated his time to work at the Logan Correctional facility for over 5 years now. I know this plan to close Logan will be bad for my family, the employees, and the Logan County region. We can't move to be near a different facility, and I don't want my husband having to drive 2 hours or more a day to work. His children need him at home more, not less. Most of the other locally located prisons are almost 2 hours away from our home. Lincoln prison is the only one close enough for him to transfer to and I know not all of Logan's employees will be able to transfer there. If he had to drive that much to a new facility elsewhere, it will cost us a lot more in gas and travel expenses, which is unfair and would more than likely cause a decline in our overall quality of life. It would be a shame for IDOC to lose hundreds of employees they have already spent thousands of dollars on training and who have done everything just to serve their state. Logan's employees depend on their jobs! They have lives and families to support; please don't let them close Logan.

I've been told Logan has plenty of good educational, vocational, drug treatment, and mental health programs. Logan is in a central region for amazing healthcare facilities in Peoria, Springfield, Bloomington, and Decatur. Losing Logan could potentially cause Memorial Health to close its sister facilities in Lincoln, due to losing residents. From what I understand Logan Correctional Center is a good location, but just needs some repairs and newer housing units built. Why can't it be built in the same place and IDOC avoid disrupting thousands of people's lives? I'm not writing about the lives of just the employees and their families, but did IDOC take into consideration the families of the people incarcerated at Logan? Did they consider how many of their families could have their lives disrupted? Central Illinois doesn't need another abandoned facility either! IDOC doesn't seem to have any good plan in place and has neglected to think about how this move would impact their employees, their families and the economy of Lincoln, IL. We go to Lincoln a lot just because it's where work is, if Logan closes then Lincoln won't

get our business. IDOC has neglected the fact that the closing of Logan could and would result in the loss of hundreds of employees causing them to spend even more money on training, hiring, and building an employee base that can run a full functioning facility.

I am asking COGFA to please take my statements into consideration while determining a recommendation. I want this process to be conducted fairly and for IDOC to care more for their employees than a few Cook County inmates or spending money in a community up north rather than investing in a community in central Illinois that needs economic stability. I appreciate your time in this matter and hope you save Logan!

Leah Williams

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I've worked at Logan for almost 2 years. I have been worried about patients here due to the heat exposure and mold exposure and understaffing.

If the women at Logan were moved north, we may be able to attract more staff in addition to finding a location with more favorable health/environmental conditions.

Thank you,

**Risha Fennell, MD, FASAM**  
*Site Medical Director,*  
Logan Correctional Center

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Dear Sir/Madam

It deeply saddens me that I have to write to you regarding the recent news of Governor's Pritzker's plans to move Logan Correctional Center from its current location in Logan County, Illinois, roughly 2 hours and 6 minutes North to Will County, Illinois. While I write to you not as a current department of corrections employee, or as even a state of Illinois employee but as a concerned Logan County community member.

While I can not understand Governor Prizkter's thoughts and views of "looking beyond prisons when promoting economic development in rural Illinois." I see it as so much more than just "a prison". Unfortunately, though with Illinois's current state of economy and its continuing lack to bring new opportunities of employment here we must depend on prisons for economic development in rural Illinois communities.

My family, which includes myself, my fiancé and our 2.5 year old son live and work here in Lincoln, Illinois. Neither my fiancé or myself are employed directly by the State of Illinois however the recent news of the closure of the state facility in Logan County worries and threatens our livelihood.

I am employed in the real estate title business. My fiancé is a mechanic here at a local dealership. I see how much both of our industries are greatly influenced and supported by those that are employed with the department of corrections. The Logan Correctional Center is a well paying job, one that doesn't necessarily require a college degree of education to obtain an entry level position. Corrections has always been look to as a career that offered advancements and longevity for its employees. With this career many are able to purchase first time homes for their families, investment properties and even rental real estate, all right here in Logan County. If Logan Correctional Center is no longer here in Logan County it will not only affect those currently employed there but it will also impact so many of us that work in fields that are vastly influenced from it. If there is no prison, then there are no officers and/or staff. If there is no prison, then is there no longer going to be as many real estate transactions here? I believe that number would drastically decrease. At least that is until after everyone sells because they are forced to relocate due to the closure. Or they are foreclosed on due to the closure and lack of /decrease in income, they are no longer able to live within the means they once lived within. I then ask myself, "why would someone buy here if there are no jobs to bring them here?" OR "there is no longer a need for someone to buy here if the prison housing their loved ones while incarcerated isn't located here"

The second income in our household, is my fiancé who is a mechanic here in Lincoln. The Logan Correctional Center vans, cars, and transport vehicles are serviced through his employer. Yes, while you might ask yourself "LCC can't be the only business they have, others are also having services completed there." "They have other customers." and to this I will agree, the DOC vehicles aren't the only customer's. However, customers ALSO include Logan Correctional Center officers and/or staff and their families. These aren't limited to the service department either. All departments are frequented by LCC employees and their families.

My concern in writing to you is the huge contribution that LCC employees and their families make to the economic development that is our community. While my household does not receive a paycheck directly from Logan Correctional Center, my household still very much depends on its revenue spent by the employees. These staff members build lives here in our community. They spend money in our community. Their kids go to school here. They pay local taxes, frequent local shops, and restaurants. Which all contribute to so many of our livelihoods, in all different ways.

We can not have Logan Correctional Center be rebuilt anywhere BUT here in Logan County. Infrastructure and good paying jobs need to be offered ALL over Illinois, not just in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs. Downstate Illinois matters, too.

**KEEP LOGAN CORRECTIONAL CENTER IN LOGAN COUNTY!**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Malorie Gleason

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Martha Simmons, I am a Logan Correctional Center employee, a Logan County resident.

I am writing to express my strong opposition of closing Logan Correctional Center and moving it out of Logan County. I do agree that there does need to be a new facility built, but not out of Logan County. The state of Illinois needs to do the **RIGHT** thing and rebuild Logan Correctional Center right **HERE** in **Logan County**. I would like to take this opportunity to give some important reasons why Logan Correctional Center should stay in Logan County.

One very good reason would be the whole community that is Logan County. Logan County deserves to have good paying jobs available. Most recently the community has lost Lincoln College, and Lincoln Christian University. Not that long ago Lincoln lost Lincoln Developmental Center. People left our community then. Once again Logan County is being told it will lose another 500 jobs. A job lose of this size will mean some that call Logan County home will no longer be part of Logan County. Another direct loss of these 500 jobs the community will lose some, maybe possibility all services that are publicly funded. The very services that are vital for a big portion of Logan community residents. Anyone who depend on publicly funded services will be affected. Guess what that means all 27, 987 (per 2020 census) of us. All of us depend on services like fire/rescue/police, they do receive some funding from public dollars. Public dollars that are calculated on things like census numbers. Services like meals on wheels, public transportation that is provided by CAPCIL. Everything and everyone that counts on receiving monies based on Logan County's population numbers will be affected either directly or indirectly by this loss of these 500 jobs. Are you thinking how is this possible when only 500 jobs are at stake? Imagine a community with a population, the same size as more than a couple Logan County towns put together, no longer existing in Logan County. It is not fair, and certainly not even remotely a good sound decision to disrupt an economy/community that is fragile already.

Martha Simmons

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May 14, 20204

Dear Sir/Madam

I have attempted to write this letter more times than I can count, the idea of writing a letter to save my livelihood scares me to death and breaks my heart.

My name is Shelbie Bolyard, I am a Women and Family Services Counselor at Logan Correctional Center, I am new to this role but not new to Logan Correctional Center. I was a correctional officer for 10 years before moving to the non-security side of the department. I have a home and family here in central Illinois because of my employment at Logan Correctional Center. I became a correctional officer at the age of 21, I lived in Lincoln, IL and needed a career. I did not just want any career, I wanted to make a difference, I wanted to strive to create a better community for myself and my family. The only way I saw to accomplish this was to become an employee at Logan Correctional Center and make a difference myself. As I stated, I become a correctional officer and was satisfied in my title as such until an opportunity arose as a Women and Family Services Counselor.

I accepted the job as a counselor to help the women incarcerated at Logan Correctional Center with their families that are, in a sense incarcerated with them. I work daily with Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the individuals in custody, I am a liaison for DOC and DCFS. I am in contact daily with DCFS caseworkers from every part of the state, I facilitate critical visits between parents and their children. The central location of Logan Correctional Center allows DCFS and supporting agencies the ability to provide the parents and children in-person visits. The Department of Corrections believes in promoting positive change for those in custody and a major was to promote this is in-person visitation. In-person visitation for parents and the children is crucial in creating and deepening the bond in which is needed to prompt social stability, secure and supportive relationships, and a strong support system. 45% of the individuals in custody at Logan Correctional Center will be released within the next 24 months; of that 45% (434) - 304 individuals in custody have children. Out of the 304 individuals with children 88% of those children DO NOT live in Cook County or the surrounding counties. That is almost 230 mothers that will be even farther away from their children, farther away from the caseworkers and farther away from the support they MUST have to succeed when they are released. A study completed in 2021 by Child & Family Social Work - As a result of the typically vast distances between families and their incarcerated loved ones, recommendations have been made for virtual visits (i.e., using computer-based video technology) as an alternative to in-person visits. Although video visits may potentially help decrease common barriers to in-person visits such as distance and the stigma of physically entering a correctional facility (Martin, 2016), more harm than good is likely to result from this approach, as virtual visits have a strong potential to reify the prison-industrial complex (i.e., the profiteering of social issues such as poverty, housing insecurity, mental illness and substance use through privatized correctional institutionalization). Although some suggest the relative benefits to video visits compared with letters or phone calls alone, this practice may also eliminate or replace in-person visits to the detriment of both the parent who is incarcerated and their children. In addition, virtual visits require that the families and loved ones of the incarcerated person have access to technology, which is not always possible. Further, when technology is available, challenges in using the technology or the quality of technology available are common for all parties involved (Digard et al., 2017). Much like phone calls, virtual visits also pose often impossible economic barriers to families through fees that can rise to \$12.95 or more for just a 30-min video call (Digard et al., 2017). This is yet another example of exploitive profiteering practices, as the incarceration of a parent often increases financial strains and exacerbates poverty in a family (Phillips, 2012). (Kremer, 2021) Moving Logan Correctional Center to Northern Illinois will do more harm than good when it comes to the children of the mother's incarcerated, the DCFS cases in which the mother's

are fighting to keep their rights' and the DCFS caseworkers that will no longer have a centralized location for visits.

On a more personal note, I am originally from Lincoln; I was raised in a home that was supported by Logan Correctional Center – my father worked as a stationary fireman for 20 years at Logan Correctional Center. My husband is a Correctional Lieutenant at Logan Correctional Center, he has worked at Logan Correctional Center for over 12 years. My brother is a correctional officer at Logan Correctional Center and has been for over 4 years. My aunt just started as a human resource representative at Logan Correctional Center. I am just 1 of many employees at Logan Correctional Center that depends on the income from Logan Correctional Center – I am just 1 employee and I have 3 other family members that work at Logan. Not only will closing Logan Correctional Center and moving it north effect my home, but it will affect my entire family, my daughters, my siblings, my cousins. These people have created a home near Logan County, their families are growing here – without a reliable source of income for these people, MY family, will not be able to continue to live the life they have worked for. Yes, DOC has stated that they can find jobs for all employees at Logan Correctional Center within a 90-mile radius but who, can you tell me, is willing to drive 90 miles ONE WAY to get to work. Who is willing to move their entire families 90 miles? 90-miles away from my children's school, from their friends, from their family. Who is willing to pay for gas for a one way 90-mile drive? Without a pay raise, with expectation that it is okay to make your employees drive 1.5 hours to work ONE way after a 16-hour shift because you now must work overtime to compensate for the new gas bill.

I am in no way saying Logan Correctional Center should remain open in its current state, everyone can agree on that. I am stating, taking a stance, that Logan Correctional Center should not be moved out of Logan County and away from the employees that service this department every day. I am stating that a new correctional center must be built on the grounds that Logan Correctional Center currently inhabits, I am saying that new housing units, a new learning center, a new vocational center, a new receiving and classification center, a new intense behavior modification center, a new health care center can be built within the acreage that Logan Correctional Center already sits on. I want to provide the individuals in custody better housing and health care, more education and more meaningful programming – I want to be part of lowering the recidivism rate, I want to be apart of bettering the community in which these individuals get out and live in, I want to help Illinois – but what I will not do, is move my home, my children, my life to a different part of Illinois because the political parties cannot see what is good for everyone in Illinois and not just the Chicago area.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Shelbie Bolyard  
Correctional Counselor I – Women and Family Services  
Logan Correctional Center

(Kremer, 2021) Kremer, K. P., Christensen, K. M., Stump, K. N., Stelter, R. L., Kupersmidt, J. B., & Rhodes, J. E. (2021). The role of visits and parent–child relationship quality in promoting positive outcomes for children of incarcerated parents. *Child & Family Social Work*, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12872>

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions.

IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life



expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Conditions at Logan are “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population.”

A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population” and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has “crumbling infrastructure,” with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the “aging” heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships.

Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support. The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety,

and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Gillian Snyder  
gillian.e.cooke@gmail.com

1211 WILLOWGROVE LN  
Mahomet, Illinois 61853

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concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

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long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

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It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Abigail Durgan  
[abbydurgan@gmail.com](mailto:abbydurgan@gmail.com)

4443 n Greenview Ave Apt 2w  
CHICAGO, Illinois 60640

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I am an employee at Logan Correctional Center. I am strongly against Logan being moved north. This would severely affect me personally in that I am a single mother to two young children. I have to work to provide for my children and I currently have about a 45 minute drive. I cannot give anymore time away from my children then what I already do.

This would also severely affect individuals in custody who live in the central to southern region. They would have more time between them and their families, which could limit strongly their visits and outside support they need. This could also change how they behave and in keeping everyone safe.

The community of Logan County will also be severely affected financially if the jobs are pulled out of the county.

Lastly there is enough land to build the facility in the same area it is already in making the transition better for both the individuals in custody and the staff as to not drastically change anyone's lives.

Thank you very much for your time.  
Sarah Taapken

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To Whom It May Concern,

I started a job in security at Springfield Memorial Medical Center in 2011 after moving back from Tennessee to better myself. I always wanted to be in some kind of law enforcement and thought I found it in security. That following year, I decided I wanted more in life and decided to apply for corrections for a better career and to better myself. I had tested and waited for months for any kind of call back. In 2013, I got a call back when I was 7 months pregnant asking if I still wanted the job and I said yes. I explained that the date they wanted me in May to start could not happen as I was due the day before the start date. The person I talked to stated that they would call me back for another class. I continued working up until the day I had my child.

Fast forward months later, I received a phone call to see if I was still interested and I of course said yes. I thought that this career was a fun and exciting opportunity. I wanted this also for a better life for my son. His father was not in the picture and I wanted him to have a better life. I started that August in the academy, then graduated in September. I started out at Logan Correctional Center and have enjoyed working out here. I have made many acquaintances since I have been here. I have established myself here as well. I never wanted to leave but go promote one day. I applied and interviewed 3 times for a Sergeant spot and got one on the third interview. I started in 2023 and have enjoyed being a sergeant since.

My son has himself established in sports in the town we live in. He has made so many friends who he does things with. I have lived in the town he goes to school in since before he started preschool. This move from Logan to Stateville will not be a good thing. I couldn't fathom the idea of uprooting my



son from everything he knows to move to a town hours away and start all over again. It will be a huge disturbance for him. Let alone, I will lose so much by moving. We will have to move away from my husband's children, my stepchildren. I can't afford to demote to an officer and wait for call rights again. I will lose several hundred dollars to a thousand a month just by demoting. Transferring out of Logan to another state job is out of the question due to me working on my college degree and I would have to test for so many other state jobs. I can't take a voluntary lay off due to me needing to help support my family. This is a hard thing to have to come across. No one wants to lose so much within months. I also could not afford to drive over 2 hours one way to get to work. It would be so much to afford.

This change will affect Lincoln so much because so many families come from out of state and stay the night in the hotels here. They also eat around Lincoln and shop in Lincoln. This will be a huge disruption for everyone in Lincoln. Lincoln was already hit with a huge loss of both Lincoln Community College and the Christian College let alone the closure of the bottle factory years ago and LDC closing many, many years ago. This is such a great loss for Lincoln and takes money from the town locally and the businesses here. We also have many people who live in other counties around Lincoln who could not afford to uproot their families as well. We have well over 500 staff that would need to be placed within the state who it would affect tremendously. There will be so many demotions and pay cuts that will not be willing. So many families would suffer.

On another note, we need to stay more centrally located than up north. We have so many writs that go down south and it would be even more costly to drive all the way up north the way down south. We are talking about several officers being on the road one way around 6-8 hours. We don't know how long the court will take and by the time they come back, it would be close to 16 hours or so within the day. So many people live all over Illinois and it's a decent drive from down south to central Illinois as well as up north to central Illinois. I think that staying here at Logan, we can rebuild here and help make it better for everyone.

Sincerely,  
Sergeant Valerie Bill

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Hello. I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed closure of Logan Correctional Center.

It is my understanding that all inmates of Logan would be relocated to a facility in Statesville, IL. Moving prisoners to the Chicago area from Lincoln would create a hardship for their families, who would have to travel a significantly longer distance in order to make visits.

It is further my understanding that approximately 65% of the inmates at Logan are from central and southern Illinois, meaning the vast majority of their families would have longer travel times for visits.

I urge you to take the steps necessary to keep Logan Correctional Center open, maintaining a balance within the state for affected families.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Merideth

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers. From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Conditions at Logan are “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population.”

A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population” and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has “crumbling infrastructure,” with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the “aging” heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women’s correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances

directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships.

Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to

their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Holly Krig  
[holly.krig@gmail.com](mailto:holly.krig@gmail.com)  
8146 West Charmaine Road  
Norridge, Illinois 60706

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Dear Members of the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

The information presented by IDOC to CGFA tells compelling arguments supporting their desire to move Logan Correctional Center (LCC) to Stateville. However, their reports need to explore the sizeable impact of this closure on Logan County.

A portion of their argument is that there is more opportunity in Will County than in Logan County for a qualified workforce and the availability of goods. They state that Will County's population provides increased recruitment opportunities from a robust talent pool. However, the employee vacancy rate at Stateville is 30.1% - considerably higher than Logan's current vacancy rate of 21.1%. This vacancy rate is even more interesting given that the two counties had the same unemployment rate in January 2024, 5.5%. This potential relocation could significantly impact the Logan County community, uprooting families and impacting our small businesses.

Additionally, IDOC suggests that the proximity to Cook and the other collar counties "enhances access to a broad network of providers and vendors, further supporting the facility's operations need and the rebuild process." According to the National Economic Resilience Data Explorer, aka NERDE, Will County's capacity for cooperation between Institutions and Partnerships is low, while Logan's capacity is Moderate. While Will County's partners may be closer in proximity, their collaborative efforts don't reflect the same. In both cases, IDOC's arguments are based more on the perception of urban versus rural than the actuality.

Additionally, IDOC has stated that there is a lack of programming available to the women at LCC. The basis for that statement is that their education partner, Northwestern University, is far removed from the LCC facility. I would challenge IDOC to utilize Central Illinois's many universities providing quality education: Bradley University, Illinois State University, Millikin University, and University of Illinois at Springfield. If IDOC had utilized local universities, Lincoln might have been able to sustain the life of Lincoln College, Lincoln Christian University, or both. This underscores the advantages of keeping the facility in Logan County, where we have a wealth of educational resources that could be tapped into.

IDOC states that 850 positions are available within a 90-mile radius of Logan. It is no secret that inflation is a factor in our world today. A November 2023 article from marketplace.org states, "Inflation impacted people living in rural areas more because they spent considerably more money on goods with higher price increases. Which goods am I talking about? I'm talking about the vehicle purchases, and I'm talking about gasoline." Suggesting that an employee in Logan County can drive up to 90 miles to make the same salary and, therefore, has a net zero impact on those employed by IDOC is convenient but not realistic. This situation could lead to financial strain and increased employee stress, a factor that should be considered. Those families will likely be forced to consider moving away from their homes and removing their children from Logan County schools. This potential upheaval in the lives of the employees and their families should not be taken lightly.

Logan County has seen a population loss in the past ten years, as IDOC suggested. The county has seen population declines since 1970, primarily due to the decline of US manufacturing, which hit its pinnacle around 1977. As manufacturers left rural areas and fled to urban sites, rural populations' ability to make a competitive wage went with them. Rural families were forced to leave their hometowns for a decent salary – resulting in increased growth in urban areas. The decade with the most significant losses is of interest in the history of Logan's population decline. IDOC mentions that Logan has seen a 1% population loss since 2010. Of greater importance is that Logan has lost 11.46% of its population since

2000 as a direct result of the State's abrupt closure of Lincoln Developmental Center and the corresponding loss of 700 jobs in 2002. This population loss is 1.54 times the losses experienced in the county during the preceding 30 years.

It should be noted that IDOC has misrepresented the demography of Logan County, understating its diversity. Logan County's population is 86.69% white, 5.99% black or African American, 3.48% Hispanic or Latino, 3.44% two or more races, 0.3% Asian, 0.05% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 0.05% other. There is no denying that Will County's 700,000 residents are more diverse than Logan County's 29,000. However, if demography is a part of the argument to move LCC to Will County, the statistics should be accurately represented.

An April 2024 Economic Impact Study conducted by the University of Illinois estimates that the closure of LCC will induce the loss of an additional 57 jobs in the region and have an economic impact of \$61 Million.

Jobs at LCC fall into the government and government enterprises sector. This sector is the largest employer in Logan County, with 1,489 employees. The loss of Logan Correctional Center will reduce employment in this sector by 28.4%. The secondary job losses are most likely within the Retail Trade Sector, Logan County's third-largest industry by jobs. The impact will not stop there. Reduced tax revenue and fewer students within the public school system will impact Lincoln's future, affecting the quality of education and career opportunities for future generations. As our educational offerings are negatively affected, our ability to attract new businesses will also decline.

IDOC's long-term plan to include DCEO and Intersect Illinois in marketing the property to site selectors ignores some of its essential characteristics. Logan Correctional Center's property is landlocked by forest, and Lincoln Correctional Center is across the street. It has no rail access and no direct access to I-55.

The plan to move Logan Correctional Center to the Stateville site will exacerbate the State's trend toward suburbanization. In rural areas, economic growth trends are complex. Part of this difficulty is that our populations have moved toward more urban areas to follow manufacturing, as noted above. More population leads to increased economic growth opportunities. Governor Pritzker has stated that relying on State facilities, like prisons, is not a good economic growth strategy. Keeping Logan Correctional Center in Logan County is not about economic growth. It is about economic stability. IDOC's economic impact reiterates this point, "... the compensation paid to current employees is likely to be much higher than the average in Logan County; without re-employment in other facilities, the loss to the county will be important." Let us not forget that IDOC's report for re-employment of those at Logan Correctional will take them as far as 90 miles one way.

Finally, there is no denying that Logan Correctional Center needs to be rebuilt. IDOC's systemic negligence has made an environment no longer safe for those who reside or work at LCC. I challenge the notion that Will County is the only place to build a state-of-the-art facility. Rebuilding Logan Correctional Center within Logan County will show the State's commitment to all Illinoisians, not only those who reside in our most populated areas.

Sincerely,  
Andrea Runge

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Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.



Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

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A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population” and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has “crumbling infrastructure,” with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the “aging” heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women’s correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances

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By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

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It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Ashton Hoselton  
[ashtonhoselton@gmail.com](mailto:ashtonhoselton@gmail.com)  
12656 W Graves Ave  
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To Whom Concerned,

My name is Brock Webb. I am the Identification Supervisor at Logan Correctional Center. I am on my 26yr in the department. I am boldly **opposed** to the closing/ moving of this facility. The impact on the lives of staff, individuals in our custody, as well as Logan County and the city of Lincoln would be detrimental. Logan being the only female reception center in IDOC should be in a central location. Southern counties already have several hundred miles to drive weekly to bring county intakes. Individuals in custody's family members need a central location for visiting purposes.

Before this position I was a Correctional Vocational Instructor. I ran the Helping Paws Service dog training program here at the facility. This is the top recidivism reduction program in the state of Illinois. Logan averages 16 service dog graduations per year. The dogs are owned by two non-profit companies that do not charge recipients for the dogs. In the five years I was over the program, hundreds of recipient's lives were greatly improved by these service dogs. The impact the program has on the individuals in custody who train the dogs goes just as deep as the recipients. I'm afraid of what would happen with this program in the event of moving the facility outside a central location. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brock Webb

[Brock.webb@illinois.gov](mailto:Brock.webb@illinois.gov)

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Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships.

Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding

it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

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It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Kristi Kawanna  
[kkawanna@gmail.com](mailto:kkawanna@gmail.com)  
4327 N Hazel street  
Chicago , Illinois 60613

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Hello, I would like to start by saying thank you for taking the time to read this statement. My name is Brandy Austin. I'm a Substance Use Counselor with Westcare located at Logan Correctional Center. I started here at Logan on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022 as an Administrative Assistant. I then became a Substance Use Counselor on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024. When I started my position here in 2022 I walked in that first day wondering what I had gotten myself into. I quickly learned that the employees here at Logan operate like a big family. Everyone helps everyone no matter what. The employees here at Logan want you to succeed here and everything they can to make that happen. I have never had a position or worked at a place that I loved going to work at every day before. I wake up and look forward to coming here, learning more, and helping the individuals in custody learn about sobriety so they can stay out of the criminal justice system. I'm also the single mother of three great kids. I'm so grateful for the opportunities Logan CC has given me to further my career and be able to provide for my children, one who is one year shy of finishing her bachelor's in law. I have had the pleasure of being the counselor for many individuals in custody who have recently been transferred to Decatur CC due to the possible closing of Logan. These ladies have been very upset because Decatur doesn't have the adequate programing to provide these ladies the chance to prevent recidivism. I can't tell you the number of ladies who have recently come into our office scared because of what their future holds because they were being transferred out of Logan. Here at Logan they have and have had a very structured therapeutic community within Westcare. They have the support and resources to go on and have successful sober lives. These ladies do deserve the chance to grow, learn, and change their lives.



I believe closing Logan and relocating it would be devastating to not only the individuals in custody, but the employees also that work here, Logan County, and all central IL where Logan employee families live. Central Illinois depends on Logan CC being here in Lincoln. I believe rebuilding here in Lincoln would be the best for all of Illinois. Why not rebuild here in Logan County? I know the price tag is an issue and while it may look better in numbers to relocate up North it's the wrong decision for so many reasons. In the long run rebuilding, here is the most beneficial for so many reasons. Think of the families that will lose the way to provide for their children, unemployment rates will go up, many if not all employees cannot afford to move to follow the position up North, the devastation it would inflict on Logan County and all Central IL. I implore you to make the right decision to rebuild Logan here in Lincoln. I thank you very much for taking the time to read this statement on how I believe closing and relocating Logan would devastate the employees, families, individuals in custody, and the community. I pray you make the right decision for Central Illinois.

Thank you,  
Brandy Austin  
Substance Use Counselor

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My name is Dr. Walker and I am a MHP housed at Logan CC. I love my job and the opportunity to work with the mission of rehabilitation in mind. I feel as if I learned so much and have grown a ton as the population I work directly with here at Logan. If Logan is moved closer to Chicago I will have to travel a long distance if I want to remain in the same position (working with incarcerated women). I just bought a house and I am extremely upset as this move can impact my ability to take of my family (I have a partner and a two year old daughter). I am hoping we can save Logan and I will continue to do what I love with the population I love working with.

Thanks,

Dr. Walker

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*My name is Christi Withers, I am an Account Technician at Logan Correctional Center. I live in Logan County. The impact this closure will have on my family and our community is devastating. My family relies on the income and health care benefits that this job offers to be able to pay bills, buy food, receive health care, as well as support my community. If this facility is closed, this will be the fourth time, I myself, have been affected by a closure within Logan County. Myers Industries, Lincoln Developmental Center, and Ardagh Group (The Bottle Factory) all 3 were shutdown, shattering hundreds of families and crushing our community. There is no doubt that our facility needs to be rebuilt due to years of neglected maintenance by the leaders of this state, but there is also no doubt that Logan Correctional Center should be rebuilt right here in Logan County, to not further negatively impact our community. The Families of the Individuals in Custody also deserve to keep this facility centrally located to be able to have continued visits with their children and other family members. Thank you for your time.*

*Concerned Employee and Citizen,  
Christi Withers*

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My name is Trisha Parmenter and I work as an account tech in Payroll at Logan Correctional Center. Saying that closing Logan CC would be devastating to myself and my family would be an understatement. I have struggled for years to find a career in Lincoln where I didn't have to commute sixty or more miles a day to my job. This gives me the family time that I was unafforded previously which helps my family greatly. As most people do, I rely on my salary from Logan for housing, transportation, food and much more. This job allows me to give my family shelter, which isn't always easy. As someone who spent the majority of 2022 without a home, I cannot possibly express to you how invaluable it is to have a roof over our heads and a place to call home. I've also made some incredible friends at Logan and we've become a little family. What hurts one hurts the rest. Watching these colleagues worry about their future is torture. As for the community and Central Illinois, a complete closure of Logan would spell disaster for the economy, small businesses, and the families whose livelihoods depend on this prison. There is no doubt that the current facility is in shambles due to years of neglect by the State of Illinois, but to rebuild anywhere else but in Logan County would be just as negligent to the individuals in custody. To force these individuals to move North would complicate their lives and their mental health. Keeping them centrally located will enable them to continue to get visits from friends and family as well as continue their medical care with the providers that they have been seeing for years. Contrary to popular belief, not all of the individuals in custody are from the Chicago area. What are the families who live in Southern or Central Illinois supposed to do? Drive three, six, eight hours to visit their loved one for only a short time? Logan County is the perfect, centrally located place to keep the facility that takes pride in caring for these individuals.

Thank you for your time,

*Trisha Parmenter*

Account Tech- Payroll  
Logan Correctional Center  
[Trisha.parmenter@illinois.gov](mailto:Trisha.parmenter@illinois.gov)  
(217)735-5581 Ext: 3232

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My name is Brian Lechleiter, currently I am the Institutional Laundry Manager at Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln, Illinois. Closing and moving Logan Correctional Center out of Logan County will be detrimental for my livelihood. I am born and raised in Logan County; I have worked at Logan Correctional Center for 14 years. I have put in the time and waited my turn to promote within the facility. I promoted to Sergeant July 2022 and then took a promotion to the Institutional Laundry Manager June of 2023. There is only one Institutional Laundry Manager per facility, not only would I lose my current job title, but I would also have to take a demotion and loss of pay if transferred to a different facility. I currently have a little over 10 years before retirement, uprooting my life, my plans, and my goals that I have worked hard for is a slap in the face. My family is all from Logan County, along with my girlfriend. If I had to transfer and move it would have unknow consequences on my personal life as well.

Not only will closing and moving Logan Correctional Center affect me personally but the surrounding communities, and Logan County as a whole. Lincoln Illinois already has taken hit after hit with closers of Lincoln Developmental Center, Lincoln College and Lincoln Christian University Etc. There are very few jobs in Logan County that offer a livable wage or a decent

retirement. Closing and moving Logan Correctional Center will crush the economy. There are a lot of individuals that uprooted their families and lives to take the job at Logan Correctional Center, and a majority of these individuals purchased homes within Logan County. Moving Logan Correctional Center from Logan County will force many of these individuals to move their families once again across the state to a different institution. Not only will it have a financial affect on these individuals, but their children having to start over in a new town, new school and chances are not having the quality of life they have right here in Logan County.

The closer of Logan Correctional Center will also affect the individuals in custody. I was working at Logan Correctional Center in 2013 when Dwight Correctional Center was closed and the individuals in custody were transferred to Logan Correctional Center. I can admit from firsthand experience that we were not prepared, and nor were we in any shape or form trained for the new population. Dealing with a female population, especially a population that has a high level of SMS (Severely Mentally Ill) individuals without the proper training or experience was a trainwreck. Currently the staff at Logan Correctional Center has gone through extensive training and have hands on experience on dealing with the special needs of many of these individuals in custody. Moving Logan Correctional Center 2+ hours north to the same grounds of Statesville is too far for the majority of the current staff at Logan Correctional Center to commute or move. And moving the female population of Logan Correctional Center to a facility where they must learn the staff, and the staff must spend years learning the individuals in custody, their specialized needs and the training that is necessary to efficiently run the facility will be a struggle. Not to mention the inability to keep staff at the current Statesville Correctional Center, now you will introduce a whole other specialized prison along with a R&C. Moving Logan Correctional Center 2+ hours north will also add a lot of stress on the individuals in custody. Especially the individuals that have family in central and more so southern Illinois. There are already lack of resources for families in southern Illinois to see their incarcerated loved ones. This will add more complications for those families. A good portion of our individuals in custody population are from the central and southern regions which only makes sense to leave Logan Correctional Center in a centralized location.

Thanks,

**Brian Lechleiter**  
**Institutional Laundry Manager**  
**Logan Correctional Center**  
**(217)735-5581**  
**Ext: 2361**

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers. From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Conditions at Logan are “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population.”

A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population” and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has “crumbling infrastructure,” with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the “aging” heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

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The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to

their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

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It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Mary Lhotak  
[marylhotak@gmail.com](mailto:marylhotak@gmail.com)  
2040, Dublin Lane  
Hanover Park, Illinois 60133

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

As a clergy person with a doctorate in Public Policy and Prisons, I have had the opportunity to visit prisons across the state of Illinois, other locations in the United States, and other countries.

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

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Rev. Dr. Christopher Pierson

Christopher Pierson  
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StreamwoodStreamwood, Illinois 60107

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I am Major Stephen Kretschmer and am one of the 3-11 Shift Supervisors. I am the Illinois Special Olympics Facility Coordinator. My family and I, set up and work the Cop on the Roof Top for SOIL. When Dwight Correctional Center closed, I choose Logan Correctional Center not only because my family and I live in Bloomington, IL but because I had a good understanding of the Female Individuals in Custody. I worked hard to promote and become a 16 year veteran in the Department of Corrections. My wife is the Director of our Home School Community and the Support Representative our local area. My wife is also a Substitute Teacher for District 87. My 16 year old son works for Chick-Fa-La and a member of the local Civil Air Patrol. My 14 year old is a Team Leader at Miller Park Zoo. My 12 year old and 10 year old are both members of Studio Connect Music Theater and Homeschool Choir. My 10 year is also doing gymnastics. The whole family volunteers at Eastview Christian Church in the Welcome Room, Nursery, Café, Tech Booth and Jr High Set-up Team. If Logan Correctional Center is closed, this will all be effected negatively because many people will miss my family in the community. My wife and four boys would have to reestablish the selves in new programs where ever we land.

I was not at Logan Correctional Center when the facility was co-ed. I was told of many problems that occur due to the fact that you have male Individuals in Custody and female Individuals in Custody in the same prison. Not only do females get overlooked and often forgotten. The amount of relationships that would occur through the fence, would create problems and cost the state even more money. The mental health issues are also a problem. Many Female Individuals suffer from trauma of being scared of males Individuals. We also see a rise in Gang presence when male Individuals in custody and Female Individuals are only separated by a fence.

**Major Stephen Kretschmer**  
3-11 Shift Commander  
Logan Correctional Center  
Illinois Department of Corrections  
(217) 735-5581 ext 3634

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Today, I am writing to oppose the plan to move Logan Correctional Center out of Logan County. If implemented, this decision would have far-reaching negative consequences for those employed at Logan Correctional Center and their families, those serving their sentences and their families, the local community, and surrounding communities. Further, numerous compelling reasons exist to keep Logan Correctional Center at or near its current location.

Those employed at Logan Correctional Center face pay cuts when transferring and stress on their families of having to uproot their lives and relocate. This change often threatens the family's financial stability and impacts spouses' and significant other's employment. The stress of such a decision on families cannot be adequately expressed as each individual, as well as their loved ones and friends, are affected. Those employed at Logan are active and integral

members of the communities in which they live. They spend money in their communities, supporting the local economies, volunteering in organizations, and significantly contributing to the well-being of the areas in which they live.

Those serving their sentences at Logan have access to many services and programs that work to rehabilitate and reduce recidivism. A decision to move the facility would disrupt such programs and the progress of the individuals in custody. Another area where progress would suffer is mental health services. Unfortunately, a lack of appropriate mental health care is the very reason many women find themselves incarcerated. At Logan, a comprehensive mental health team collaborates to rehabilitate and stabilize individuals and give them the best opportunity to become functioning members of society upon release.

These individuals are already suffering adverse effects at the prospect of a move. A recurrent theme among them before entering the correctional system is a lack of stability. Some have already had to move to Logan from a closed institution. Continuity of care and the therapeutic relationships established will suffer, increasing the risk of individuals acting out and putting themselves and the staff in undue danger. The families of these individuals are members of communities throughout the state and want to know that their loved ones are safe and receiving needed care.

Communities all over Illinois benefit from programs such as the PAWs program, which provides training for service dogs, those who provide goods and services to the prison, and counties that send individuals to serve sentences at Logan. Logan's central location also benefits from the need to transport individuals in custody to various locations across the state. The state already owns more than enough land to keep this facility in Logan and not disrupt many lives. The Logan staff knows this unique population, can meet their needs, and is an invaluable asset in serving the Department of Corrections and counties all over the state with loved ones housed there. The experience and knowledge of the Logan staff are irreplaceable and essential for individuals in custody and their families. For these reasons, I urge you to reconsider the plan to move Logan Correctional Center.

I appreciate your time and consideration in this matter.

Amy John-Chapman  
Behavioral Health Technician  
Wexford Health Sources, Inc.  
Logan Correctional Center

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Hello, I have sent a statement regarding the issues with moving Logan to Will county, now I am sending you an email to tell you what it would do to my life. I am a 60 nurse who is the MHDON here at Logan. I live locally and have worked at Logan for 6 years. I love my job and enjoy what I do. Working in a prison can be challenging and rewarding. I have worked my whole life to help others, and I would like to continue this until I am ready to retire.

I have 2 grandchildren living at home with me due to the loss of their father 2 years ago. The fact that I do not have to drive out of town for my job helps me to get the kids to school and to attend my granddaughters IEP meeting when it is needed. Just limiting the amount of time I have to be on the road to and from work enables me to spend more time with them. I have been a nurse a long time and have moved past the part in my career of working in a nursing home or hospital. The loss of Logan CC in Logan county would force me to change my career focus or to retire early. Neither of these options are appealing to me. I'm a nurse and nurses are in short supply, I get that but direct patient care is not what I have been working for at this stage in my life. I want to continue in my present position until I retire. I hope that you all will take into consideration the amount of people that would be affected by this move. Thank you for your consideration. D.Henrikson MHDON

**Darlene Henrikson**

MH DON

Wexford Health Sources, Inc.

Logan Correctional Center

(217) 735-5581 | Ext. 3239

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions.

IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee at Logan, there is at least one nearby position

available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Conditions at Logan are "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population."

A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population" and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has "crumbling infrastructure," with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the "aging" heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan's buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior,

Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships.

Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding



it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Connor Boyke  
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3249 N Karlov Ave., Apt. 3  
Chicago, Illinois 60641

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Kaitlyn Curtis  
[kaitlyn.curtis@gmail.com](mailto:kaitlyn.curtis@gmail.com)  
21w511 Monticello Road  
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137-6438

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My name is Madeline Moody, and I was hired to run the general library here at Logan Correctional. I am also overseeing the legal library at this time. I started in January of 2024 and before I was hired the facility only had substitute librarians since July of 2023. I have come to love this job as it is the most all-around career within my studies and have gotten the opportunity to meet wonderful people within our facility.

Losing Logan Correctional will ultimately affect what I have known my entire life. I live outside of Lincoln, but I still live within the borders of Logan County and have forever. I became a single mother within the last year, and I have strived very hard to become a state employee to give my little girl the best life that I can. Logan Correctional has given that opportunity to me as well as not dreading to come to work every day. I studied criminal justice, legal studies, and Spanish. I worked in the college library as well. This job is the literal epitome of what I went to school for and worked to become in college. Personally, I believe I will be fine, and God will take me where I'm supposed to be but removing jobs from 400+ staff within our facility seems drastic to me to cover your 700,000+ people in Chicago. This is barely a fraction to your goal. Goodbye to our 28.4% of employees that make up the sum of the largest employment sector of the area. Sure, there are other facilities close by, but those facilities do not have MY job position open. The closure will impact the labor income and taxes for federal, state, and county. I have closely reviewed the state sites to watch my fate unfold since Pritzker decides that for us all right? Logan County is a centralized location within Illinois that provides enough resources to make it worthwhile.

The State in my opinion pleases Chicago/Joliet and no one else. At my last job, Spero Family Services- Wraparound Facilitator, I was working with families that were involved with DCFS to give them a better chance at success by providing resources to them. Most of my families were from the Southern Illinois region. To be frank, I was amazed at how little the southern portion of the state really had to offer, but then again Chicago runs Illinois right?! When are we going to change the capital to Chicago and not Springfield? Wouldn't the State create more jobs, by not stripping us of ours, and providing the re-entry programming and other resources to the other regions of Illinois? Shout out to Pritzker for renovating a new Juvenile Justice Center within Logan County that should be opening within a year. There's a new resource within our area, but wait we are gaining one just to lose one.

Recidivism rates can be high, and if our Juveniles have experienced hard lives, some will make their way back into prison when they are older. The Juvenile Justice Center was supposed to be built to keep families centralized within the state. The same goal here is being thrown out for our women at Logan Correctional. This may not be the case, but on the off chance that these women's children find themselves locked up in a Juvenile Justice Center, who is to say that we should remove the mothers from the area in which the child is placed? It is to be believed that some individuals in custody have family that will follow them for easier visitation purposes. Again, this is uprooting families and the livelihoods of these individuals and family. These families would have to relocate up north near Chicago/Joliet, where the economics are unbearable.

The transporting of individuals in custody to other sides of the state adds to more money and time. A memo was just released stating that to transport individuals, other facilities have to be contacted to run any form of bathroom breaks. Fifty-four percent of Logan Correctional's population is from down state Illinois, yet we are appealing the 700,000+ people that do not have any association with our community, careers, or the facility in whole. By moving the facility up north, we are creating the potential for longer transportations to the other parts of the state which means more stops and communication/intermingling with other facilities. You, the state, are asking for individuals to potentially relocate to work within other facilities and/or commute to those facilities which are potentially further away causing financial strain on certain staff. The state is spending money to fix our facility in i.e., the vocational building where I am typically located and is fixing other housing units. Why are we spending millions on a facility that the state wants to close if the state is planning to spend \$900 million on this new multifunctional prison complex? Seems like we have a budget that could keep our facility located here with improvements and work to fulfill more programming for our population.

By working in the library, I have access to speak one on one with many of the individuals in custody and overhear a lot of concerns that the women have. I have spoken to a few of my workers and a few other individuals. One of the major concerns that was given had to do with medical procedures. The wait time for medical assistance on the outside is already long for these individuals in custody, but the populations we deal with here are not as large as up north. Waiting for treatment in Chicago could take much longer than waiting for assistance in Champaign, Decatur, Lincoln, Springfield, Peoria, St. Louis, etc. Logan Correctional is located in an area that makes getting around to another town/city easier for treatments. Chicago/Joliet is jam packed with traffic creating longer wait times on the roads as well. Another

concern for “long-timers” and “lifers” is that with this new multifunctional complex they are disregarding the population like these individuals. Lifers are not looked at to give any re-entry programming to since they are not realistically going to get out most times, but what if the laws change for these individuals? We need to think about giving those individuals more programming as they have not been introduced into the newcoming of today’s society. Again, this plays into recidivism rates all across the state of Illinois. What would this new multifunctional building really be giving to these women? The state should be implementing programming and resources in every region to better our communities and not take from them.

In all reality, the state will choose what it wants to do with our facility, but I will miss the experience, atmosphere, and good people I have met at this facility if my job is stripped from me. Logan Correctional can and should be improved on in areas, but taking the whole facility from our community shows that the state doesn’t care about the entirety of the state of Illinois. Sending prayers to all my fellow staff members in the event that our lives have changed from the closure of Logan Correctional.

Madeline Moody

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Samuel Mozes  
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Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions.

IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical

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Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

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Kris Stokes  
[k5stokes@gmail.com](mailto:k5stokes@gmail.com)  
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Elizabeth Sheridan  
[elizabethsheridan1988@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethsheridan1988@gmail.com)  
1454 W Cuyler Ave  
Chicago, Illinois 60613

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My name is Tanner Zeck. I am a correctional Sergeant at Logan Correctional Center. Closing Logan Correctional Center would be detrimental to myself, my family, and the community. Both my wife and I are employed at Logan. Therefore, if you close, we will have no income. There are many people that are in the same boat here at Logan. Logan county has lost Lincoln community college, Lincoln Christian college, and many more businesses. Lincoln, I think then would become nothing more than a gas stop for interstate 55. I signed a contract at the beginning of my career to work at Logan Correctional Center. Not at another facility. Me having to drive one and a half hours plus one way to work is not an accommodation. I don't think anyone in their right mind would uproot their family for a job where obviously we are nothing but political pawns, nor would they spend three plus hours on the road away from family for such job. It would also be a safety hazard as mandatory overtime is very much prevalent. I personally think it would be a lawsuit waiting to happen. I doubt the state would pay for gas, lodging, per diem, maintenance on vehicles or anything else that comes with being on the road for three plus hours a day. I think it would eventually lead to the state paying more in death benefits than paying people to work. You also must think about the individuals and their families that are from the southern part of the state. Logan where it sits now about halfway for families from the North and Families from the South. If you move Logan to the Northern part of the state families and municipalities from the southern part of the state would be on the road for five to six hours one way. You have also overlooked the staff that would be on the road for court writs in the southern part of the state, ten hours of driving round trip, a lot of overtime would be pointlessly paid out, and staff members going into a third shift would have to be awarded time off, thus creating more overtime. I urge you to keep Logan correctional center in the central region of Illinois as it would impact more than the staff and individuals that are already here. It would impact the whole state negatively. Both my wife and I are veterans with working with the female individual in custody population with a combined total of 18 years at Logan, moving Logan North where the staff have not been trained to work with the female population would lead to more staff assaults, thus leading to paying more money for workman's compensation than paying people for the work they have done.

Tanner Zeck

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To whom it may concern:

I am Jared W. McDaniel. I am currently a Lieutenant at Logan Correctional Center. I am very upset with the proposal to close Logan Correctional Center.

The closure will not be good for my family or myself. I am father of 3, soon 4. This closure will greatly impact my children's opportunities. Most importantly it will impact the TIME spent with each other. The closure will also affect my livelihood. I am a Lieutenant here at Logan BUT if it closes, I will have most likely demote. I will lose money per paycheck. Less money will affect my family because it will cause more stress in the house. Stress can lead to numerous things such as – divorce, substance abuse and mental health issues. All my co-workers will also be affected in the similar ways.

Logan County / Lincoln will be greatly affected too. The closure will take away – JOBS, MONEY, AND PEOPLE. The people of Logan County work here. The people of the prison spend money in the county and city of Lincoln. All the people after they lose their jobs will move and that move will take the money spent here.

The closure and moving of Logan CC will negatively affect the population here at the prison. The move to Northern IL will affect the central and southern Illinois residents and their families. The travel will make for fewer visits. The move will also cause stress because the individuals will have to readjust to new staff. This stress will cause more staff assaults and assaults/fights.

I really hope you will keep Logan CC here in Lincoln, IL. Please reach out to me with any questions.

God Bless

Jared

Lt. McDaniel  
Logan CC  
3-11 Lieutenant

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Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional



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Melanie Wagner  
[melanie.o.wagner@gmail.com](mailto:melanie.o.wagner@gmail.com)  
3736 w berteau  
Chicago, Illinois 60618

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From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

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Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that

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Amanda Farah  
[amandamfarah@gmail.com](mailto:amandamfarah@gmail.com)  
1745 w 18th pl  
Chicago, Illinois 60608

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My name is Cassie Rennick, I am a Lieutenant at Logan Correctional Center. I have been employed since March of 2014. I currently reside in Lincoln, Illinois and have since I was a child. Before obtaining my job at Logan Correctional Center, I had been working two jobs and was a single mother of two. I was barely making ends meet financially. Obtaining a job at Logan seemed and proved to be the perfect opportunity for me to get back on my feet and to be close to home to still be able to raise my children. Had I obtained a job at another facility, it would have caused me to have less time with my children due to having to drive further. Having to drive further away from home also would have cost me more money due to gas prices being astronomically high. Being employed at Logan Correctional Center for the last 10 years has provided me the opportunity to financially support myself as well as provided the opportunity to be a consistent parent in my children's lives by not having to miss out on the important part of their adolescence. Also during my time at Logan I was able to purchase my own home in Lincoln Illinois. Closing Logan Correctional Center and moving the facility nearly two hours away from its current location will cause me financial hardship as well as less time with my children. It could also cause me to sell my house and re-locate somewhere else.

There are over 400 people employed at Logan Correctional Center with similar stories to mine. Many of the staff also reside in Lincoln. The closure/relocation of Logan will disrupt the lives of so many. If the

closing and moving of Logan should happen, and it absolutely should not, it will impact Logan County as well as Central Illinois. The relocation will cause staff and their families to move out of Lincoln and Central Illinois which will in turn hurt other businesses in Lincoln. Making the economy plummet. Not to mention the staff from out of town that utilize the gas stations in Lincoln will also come to a cease.

Moving Logan further North will also disrupt the lives of the Individuals in Custody. Many of the Individuals have family that live near Logan and visit quite frequently. If the facility is moved, the Individual's families will not be able to visit, therefore disrupting the mental and emotional stability of some of the individuals. The mental and emotional stability is something that Logan staff work very hard to maintain on a daily basis. The relocation will cause Illinois and Department of Corrections to spend more money. Many of the courts are located down South and if the facility is moved up North, this will cause overtime pay for staff that will have to arrive early to work and work over their regular shift just to get Individuals to and from court.

It is essential to the economy of Logan County, Central Illinois and lives of staff and Individuals in Custody that Logan Correctional Center is not relocated. The best option for everyone is to rebuild in Logan County.

Thank You,  
Lt. Cassie Rennick  
Logan Correctional Center

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Albert Stabler

[bertstabler@gmail.com](mailto:bertstabler@gmail.com)

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Lucky Mosqueda  
[l\\_mosqueda@outlook.com](mailto:l_mosqueda@outlook.com)  
7630 S. Phillips Ave Apt. 1S  
Chicago, Illinois 60649

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**To Whom it may concern,**

**Thank you for taking the time out to read this letter. I would like to give you my perspective on the effects of not only my life but my family's life if Logan Correctional Center is rebuilt anywhere out of Logan County or the immediate surrounding areas, the effects it will have on individuals in custody, and Logan County. My name is Marrisa Hayes. I have been a Correctional Officer at Logan Correctional Center for 7 years. I am also part of the Weapon's Task Force at Logan Correctional.**

**First, I would like to make clear that I completely support the re-build of Logan Correctional Center. We can all agree it is well past the point of being properly fixed. It is not safe for any individuals in custody, any staff member working there, or any person visiting. However, I do not support rebuilding Logan outside of Logan County or the**

immediate area, especially going far north or south. There is land in Logan County and even in the surrounding area that it can be rebuilt on. We are the only Receiving and Classification Woman's Prison. We are the only multi security level institution for the female population. Yes, we do have a minimum-security woman's prison, Decatur Correctional Center, but again, it's only for minimum security individuals. We are centrally located to make it easier for everyone involved. This includes family members being able to visit. Children being able to visit their mothers and grandmothers regularly. This also includes writs/furloughs. It's no surprise women see outside doctors more. Moving from being centrally located means more time being restrained in a car or van for the individuals without being able to stretch or move. Can you imagine sitting in a Black Box for approximately 4 plus hours, one way, just to see your doctor for a follow up appointment?! Moving from being centrally located would also mean more overtime hours are being spent on regular medical appointments which in turn will continue to cause the state more money. Majority of Logan's population does not come from the northern counties. They come from the central and southern regions, so the effect will be greater on most of our individuals. The lack of family and friend, in person, support will affect majority of our individuals. Logan has individuals that are Seriously Mentally Ill. The state has spent a lot of money to not only rebuild a building to better sustain these individuals but also hired a large amount of Mental Health staff to help these individuals.

Second, my personal life. Like I've stated, I have worked at Logan C.C. for 7 years. My spouse is also a Correctional Officer at Logan C.C. and has been for 5 years. Our sole financial stability comes from working at Logan. We have 3 kids and animals. We are not able to move outside of Logan County because 2 of our children have a mother they live with part time. Moving would mean giving up time with our children and rarely being able to see them. This will drastically impact their life and stability. Our oldest has a rare cancer (LCH) so losing our Health Insurance will drastically affect her health, well-being, and ability to be a normal kid as much as possible. Our family and friends live within a 35 minute drive. We will not give up time from them and time from our children with them. We are paying on a mortgage for our home in Lincoln, Illinois. We cannot move somewhere else. I moved to Lincoln 5 years ago specifically for this job. I cannot and will not uproot my family.

Finally, Logan County. Lincoln has already lost the college. If you take the prison away too, you are setting Lincoln residents up for failure. The amount of business Logan Correctional brings in helps make this town continue to be livable. Individuals in custody have family members from out of town and even out of state visit them. That means they're staying at hotels, buying gas, buying food, and buying items from the grocery stores. Official visitors that visit Logan also contribute to the community. If families move away from Logan County, they will be pulling their kids out of schools which will result in teachers being let go and funding for the school to be taken away. The financial stability of

**Logan County will decrease drastically if Logan Correctional Center closes down and does not rebuild in or immediately around Logan County.**

**Please consider the severe affects you will have on the staff working at Logan, the Individuals in custody, their families, and Logan County if you close down Logan Correctional Center and do not rebuild it in or immediately around Logan County.**

**Thank you for your time and consideration,**

**Marrisa Hayes**

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

Logan CC must be closed, demolished, and never rebuilt. Imagine hundreds of millions of dollars being invested in our communities, instead of putting our neighbors in cages.

Prisons do not help the communities they purport to help. Nearly half of the entry-level CO positions in Logan are currently vacant. These are undesirable jobs. The local government does not receive property tax revenue, so the community is unsupported. Prison towns experience stigma. Prison staff families are more likely to experience domestic violence and prison staff is more likely to experience PTSD and suicide than the average person.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, these regions can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Prisons are inherently traumatizing. They harm the people in prisons, and the families and communities that are broken up due to incarceration. Prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities. They harm instead of help.

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have



been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships.

Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening. Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC and it is an irresponsible use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Stateville Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Thank you.

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Chicago, Illinois 60651

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For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families,

creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions.

IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

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From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Conditions at Logan are "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population."

A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population" and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has "crumbling infrastructure," with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be

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Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women’s correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother’s abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women’s prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships.

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The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather

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Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

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Chicago, Illinois 60618

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It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Janna Sharp  
[sharpjanna@hotmail.com](mailto:sharpjanna@hotmail.com)  
5439 n melvina ave  
Chicago , Illinois 60630

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My name is Kara Johnson and I work at Logan Correctional Center which is currently being closed. I am opposed to this closure and would like to give a written statement for the purpose of being filed.

I work as a timekeeper at Logan CC. Should the new Logan CC facility be built up north, it would not be possible for me to relocate to keep my job. I understand that IDOC will try to transfer me to another facility, but the drive to these facilities would not be possible for me to make, as I am a mother. As a mother, my time is very valuable as I need to be with my family as much as possible and not spend needless time traveling to and from work. I could possibly have to travel up to 3 hours round trip daily just to stay employed. I'm sure you can see how being away from my family an additional 3 hours a day, 5 days a week, is not conducive to raising a family.

This is not just a struggle I alone would have should Logan CC relocate up north, but all my fellow employees as well. As noted above, I am strongly against Logan CC being relocated up north, as this would cause extreme siruption for the individuals in custody and the correctional staff.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,  
Kara Johnson

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to urge you to close Logan Correctional Center. I am a journalist and advocate for those in prison. I help produce Stateville Speaks, a 20 year prison publication. I communicate regularly with dozens of people in IDOC custody. I have written articles about Logan, after interviewing women there. I am familiar with the deplorable conditions there.

I also believe it's possible to review the sentences of several women held at Logan who would be likely candidates for early release. California, New York, and other states have closed prisons, and pursued measures to decarcerate. Illinois' prison population has dropped by 40% and yet we have not closed a single prison.

I implore you to close Logan for good, and pursue release for the women, they deserve to be home with their families.

Thank you for your consideration.

BD

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Brian Dolinar, Ph.D.  
Writer and educator

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May 20, 2024

Recipient Name

Attn: Facility Closure

802 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

facilityclosure@ilga.gov

Dear Recipient Name:

I am writing to you today regarding the potential closure and relocation of Logan Correctional Center from Lincoln in Logan County to Crest Hill in Will County and voice my opposition of this plan.

I was born and raised in Lincoln and have planted my roots here. My Parents were born and raised in Logan County. My Grandparents raised their family here and owned and operated businesses here as well. My mother and stepfather both worked at Logan Correctional Center and retired from Logan Correctional Center after over 28 years of service. My husband was also born and raised in Logan County. His family has also been lifelong residents of Logan County. My father-in-law worked at Logan Correctional Center and retired after over 25 years of service. Now, my husband and I both work at Logan Correctional Center and have for over 10 years each.

I am currently the Record Office Supervisor at Logan Correctional Center. Each correctional facility in Illinois only has only one position for my respective title, making this potential closure and/or relocation even scarier for someone like me. You see, IDOC says there are enough vacancies around the state to avoid layoffs and absorb all employees. However, these said vacancies are not for the same title or capacity you may be working in now, so now I ask, "At what cost to employees, can the state absorb all of these positions?". The department stated we would be able to possibly reduce into a job title we have been previously certified in or apply for any other vacancies that we may be qualified for. However, these vacancies are not all in Lincoln or even Logan County. This would displace not only myself, but my husband as well. If we both had to possibly return to previously certified titles would mean a drastic cut in our pay as we have both promoted in the past few years. This closure and/or relocation could mean that we are traveling in separate directions up to 90 minutes each way, every single day.

We have two young children and own our home here in Lincoln. Our children go to school and daycare in Lincoln. It would not be feasible for both of us to have to drive this kind of distance and still be able to get our children to school or daycare on our own as our child care does not even open early enough to drop off and have a 90 minute commute to be at work by 8:00am. If we would be able to secure childcare that could accommodate the additional time of commute, we would then be faced with increased cost of childcare. It will also greatly reduce the amount of time we are able to spend with our young children.

When we applied to work at Logan, it was so we could remain in this community. To relocate Logan Correctional Center to Will County would mean we would have to uproot my family and take us hours away from all family and friends or possibly take a reduction of title to remain close to Logan



County. A reduction in title and pay to either of us would be extremely detrimental to our family as we would be incurring a significant loss of income. This does not include the increased expenses we would incur from longer commutes if we were unable to remain in Logan County, nor would it include the cost of additional maintenance to vehicles due to the additional mileage, or the increased cost of childcare we would endure from having to leave our children in their care for longer periods of time.

In addition to all of my personal reasonings at wanting to keep Logan Correctional Center in Logan County, there are many factual reasons to keep it here as well. As the Record Office Supervisor, my office is responsible for processing the intake paperwork and sentencing orders for all of the new female intakes. We also prepare all court writ and medical furlough packets for our transport teams, which includes having driving directions prepared as well as notifying security the amount of drive time each writ and furlough transport will have. We are the only Female Receiving and Classification Center in the state of Illinois. Every county that has a female that has been sentenced to IDOC, has to bring their intakes to us. Being centrally located would be the most logical decision in deciding where Logan Correctional Center should be rebuilt. Our northern most counties travel 3-4 hours each way to transport new intakes to us and our southern most counties travel up to 5 hours each direction to reach us. Relocation Logan Correctional Center to Will County will require these southern counties to hold overtime just to transport their female intakes to IDOC as they would then need to travel 8 hours or more each way.

This would not only affect counties drive time for intakes, but it will also greatly impact the female division of IDOC in travel time for court writs and medical furloughs. Our security staff transport anywhere from 10-15 individuals out of the facility each day for court writs and medical furlough appointments. We travel to every county in the state at some point for these court writs. Overtime will be increased drastically if Logan CC is moved to Will County. We already hold overtime for these court writs as they may have travel time of anywhere between 1 hour and 5 hours each way, not including the time spent in the courtroom. Increasing any of this travel time due to the relocation of Logan CC would be irresponsible and dangerous. You are potentially putting officers and individuals in custody on the road for up to 16 hours a day, and if their travel time should go over 16 hours, the Department will then be faced with not only the cost of overtime but also the costs associated with compensating an employee for an unscheduled day off from working over 16 hours.

Many of the Sheriff's Departments transporting individuals to Logan have voiced their concern to us while we are completing the intake paperwork that they do not want Logan to move to Will County. They are unsure how they would be able to accommodate transporting their individuals so far away from their own county as they are facing the same staff shortages as IDOC and are already utilizing overtime for their staff to complete these transports. While Will County may have a higher population than Logan County, they still have the same struggles of hiring staff as Logan County has. In fact, Stateville Correctional Center's staff levels are already lower than Logan's, so I don't see how IDOC thinks they will suddenly have such an increase in applicants that they would be able to staff both facilities.

In talking to my coworkers and peers, there are very few of them that are willing to uproot their family and lives to move almost 3 hours away. Between the current interest rates and the increased cost of living in Will County, each employee's family would lose a substantial amount of income, and that is before the tax hikes we are going to be seeing take effect soon.

I have listened to the reasoning behind the Department wanting to relocate Logan to Will County, but to me it just doesn't make sense. The Department states there is more potential for programming and education needs in Will County, but I have to ask "Is there really"? Central Illinois is home to multiple Colleges and Universities including Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, University of Illinois, UIS – Springfield, Heartland Community College, Illinois Central College, Bradley University, LincolnLand Community College, Parkland College, and Millikin University. Currently Logan only utilizes LakeLand College, NorthPark College, and Northwestern University. Maybe the Department should do their due diligence and seek out participation from those Colleges and Universities closest to us first. Also, if the Department plans on Logan and Stateville utilizing the same space for programming and educational needs, how would it be beneficial to cut the amount of time all individuals in custody would get to utilize these services. Currently, each facility has their own programming and education facility, if the current plan comes to fruition, one building will be shared and time will have to be split between the facilities. If we have to split the amount of time to provide programming and educational needs to our individuals in custody, please explain how they will be receiving "more access to programs and education services".

In addition to the detriment this closure and/or relocation of Logan Correctional Center would be to my family, the Logan County community would suffer a huge economic loss. Logan County has already seen the closure of major employers over the years including The Lincoln Developmental Center, Myers Industries, the Ardagh Group plant, Kroger, Lincoln College, and Lincoln Christian University. I am not sure how much more our little community can take before it becomes a ghost town. I urge IDOC and Governor Pritzker to keep Logan Correctional Center in Logan County. We agree that Logan needs to be rebuilt due to its failing infrastructure, however there is no reason it should be moved to Will County.

Sincerely,

Your Name

CGFA, IDOC, Governor Pritzker, and others:

While I was at home writing this letter to you, I was approached by my 6-year-old son. He was inquiring as to what I was doing and why, because while I was busy typing away at our patio table, he and his younger sister were playing on their swing set and were waiting for me to complete my "work" so I could come play too. Well, trying to describe to your 6-year-old that you are writing to very important people to try and convince them to not get rid of your job or to not move your job hours away from your home proved to be difficult. While he didn't quite understand my initial

explanation, I tried to put it in terms he would understand. I told him if mommy and daddy's place of work closed and moved to a new city, we would have to either find a new job or possibly move away from our home. I told him how if we had to move, we would no longer live 5 minutes from his Nana and Papa, that he would possibly have to change schools, that we may have to sell our house and find a different one, and that we may have to move away from our friends and classmates. His expression changed from joy to sadness, and he looked at me and said "Tell them NO! Tell them not to move your job. I don't want a different house or a different school". He eyes started to water at this point and then he asked, "does that mean I can't see my Nanny and Papa every day or stay at their house on a weekend? I don't want to move away from them, I will miss them too much."

With that, I urge you to reconsider the closure and relocation of Logan Correctional Center. Logan belongs in Logan County!

Thank you,

Abigail Ingram and Brexton Ingram

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions.

IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Conditions at Logan are "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population."

A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population" and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has "crumbling infrastructure," with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the "aging" heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan's buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan. Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence--conditions shown to worsen mental health--are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel

and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships.

Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support. The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-

based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Joe Gosselin  
[jg\\_gosselin@yahoo.com](mailto:jg_gosselin@yahoo.com)  
326 North Sleight  
Naperville, Illinois 60540

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Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

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Theo C

[dignitysays@gmail.com](mailto:dignitysays@gmail.com)

5307 S Hyde Park Blvd

Chicago, Illinois 60615

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[jordan.p.barnes@gmail.com](mailto:jordan.p.barnes@gmail.com)

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Juliet Alejandre

[idejes3@yahoo.com](mailto:idejes3@yahoo.com)

3250 N LAWNSDALE AVE

CHICAGO, Illinois 60618

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Hello there, my name is Eric Fry and I work as a Correctional Supply Supervisor at Logan Correctional Center. I am submitting a written statement to be filed opposing the relocation of Logan Correctional Center outside of Logan County. As far as personal effects go with moving the facility approximately 2 hours away from the current location, I have parents especially my father who has been dealing with medical conditions that require my help at times. My father was in intensive care and on his death bed with organs shutting down and pancreatitis when I was 16 years of age (I'm currently 44 and he is 76) and fortunate recovery but has since been through numerous heart, neck, and spinal surgeries, plus the surgery where they put new veins in his legs from the knee down. Within the past year or so my father was diagnosed with a fatal blood disease to where his body does not produce red blood cells. He goes in to receive blood infusions regularly and is very weak just performing regular movement requiring a rest from even climbing household stairs. My mother is 78 years old and recently recovered from breast cancer and had to have a mastectomy. I regularly check on my parents and help them around their house when needed and transport them to doctor's appointments when they are unable to manage themselves. I also have a daughter here in Lincoln that goes to college online and I help her financially to allow her to further her education. With having to drive much further to work of potentially having to relocate, I will not be able to help my parents or give them the assistances they will require as things get even tougher nor be able to help my daughter as much putting all of them in a bind physically and financially. All these factors will contribute to negatively impacting me mentally, emotionally, and financially due to added costs of transportation or having to relocate in the process. Losing Logan Correctional Center from Logan County will continue hurt the county and surrounding counties even further. Lincoln in general has lost 2 Colleges recently as well factories throughout the years dwindling jobs in the town. There are also serious talks on Lincoln losing Eaton Cutler Hammer to leaving the town which would add fuel to a fire that's already bad with everything else hurting the community. Logan C.C. employs numerous people from surrounding counties that bring revenue to the county from the extra day to day trafficking they do and those that live in Lincoln support those counties with business as well because most people frequent those counties for business. As far as the families of those dealing with an incarcerated individual goes, there are more females locked up south of Joliet than north of the city. We have a lot of offenders that are locked up from areas near St. Louis as well. Logan County is a centralized area that receives, houses, and treats the mental health individuals and individuals that are not allowed to go to Decatur Correctional Center due to their crimes. Decatur is centrally located as well but has criteria that only allows a small population to be housed there based on those criteria. There was talk that building on Statesville grounds would allow them to share buildings like school buildings amongst others and setting up a schedule to prohibit intermingling. Logan C.C. had a brief period of being a co-ed facility years ago and it was a disaster that caused a later separation of sexes. Pregnancies were up causing extra expenses as a result. Sharing buildings such as schooling would result in less time for education or whatever programs or health care on both the male and female population due to

having to share things on a time schedule rather than using them primarily. Moving the other individuals further from their families and children to accommodate a smaller percentage makes no sense. The state owns plenty of property in Logan County that could allow a rebuild without disrupting day to day livelihood of everyone involved. Thank you for your time.

Eric Fry  
Logan Correctional Center  
(217)735-5581 ext. 2289

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Jude m

[jmencia1998@gmail.com](mailto:jmencia1998@gmail.com)

1010 Fairway dr

naperville , Illinois 60563

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CLOSE LOGAN AND LEAVE IT CLOSED! No more pouring billions into facilities where our loved ones are raped, neglected, and isolated within a crumbling building. Invest in the hundreds of under-resourced communities across our state instead!

August Hupp

[augusthupp@gmail.com](mailto:augusthupp@gmail.com)

1344 W Lunt Ave Apt 206

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We have an opportunity to use funding for actual community support and focus on racist, anti-Black, and classist systems that create poverty, crisis, and what the news calls crime (nevermind the structural crimes happening daily to people struggling to survive). Let's put funding into schools, community colleges, workplaces (such as ending wage theft), mental healthcare, childcare, art and music programs, and affordable housing. The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

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Julie Anderson

[andersonjulie232@yahoo.com](mailto:andersonjulie232@yahoo.com)

317 Pine Street

WILLOW SPRINGS, Illinois 60480-1515

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To Whom it may concern,

I am a retired counselor . I did retire from Decatur but I worked at Logan for many years. In fact it was at Logan where I discovered my passion for female inmates.

I worked at Logan when they had both men and women. I have never worked with a group of people who was as compassionate as the counselors I worked with at Logan. In this business you do not get to make much difference in a lot of lives but we made that difference.

The female population is a very specific population with specific issues. Logan has a long history working with this population. It will take 100s of people to staff Statesville. Most of them will not come from a prison background that worked with female, as the staff at Logan will not move up there.

You're using the excuse of college programming. Logan already has Northwestern University coming in via video. The equipment is already there.

Please reconsider moving it. It is a mistake

Kim Howe

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Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

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Jason Guthartz

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Johanna Taylor

[fojanna@gmail.com](mailto:fojanna@gmail.com)

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CHICAGO, Illinois 60608

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Greeting,

I am writing you today in regards of the recent proposal of closing Logan Correctional Center. Again, I am Seth Bramwell, I started the Dept. of Corrections in June of 2015 as a correctional officer. I was fresh out of collage and just turned 20 years old. When I joined the Dept. of Corrections I was influenced by my mother and father who both retired from the dept. as a Correctional Major and a Supply Supervisor. When being raised by them I was given a very good childhood and upbringing. When I chose this career, I knew I wanted to follow in their footsteps and be able to support myself and a family of my own someday. Since joining the Dept. of Corrections, I met my wife and has given me 3 beautiful and smart stepchildren that are treated as my own. My employment at Logan Correctional Center has given my family and myself every opportunity that we could ask for. We live in a beautiful home in the countryside of Logan County that we just moved into less than 2 years ago. With the recent announcement of Logan Correctional Center, we are scared beyond belief of what if we have to relocate our life to keep my current job as a Correctional Lieutenant with Dept. of Corrections. We are to early into our mortgage on our home to resell. We could possibly be stuck with the house and me traveling to work anywhere from 1-3hrs and or me having to find a apartment for myself to live in during my work week which would not only put a heavy financial burden on my family but also I would not see my wife, kids, family but my weekends. My current commute to work is only 20 minutes from where I reside now. My wife and I have had discussions of having a child of our own and with this recent announcement of Logan Correctional Center it has put our plans on hold with this and many other future plans. My family and I rely on my employment at Logan Correctional Center with our 8,12, and 16-year-old children. Currently I work 4-5 16hr shifts a week to supply for my family. I've never been the one that has wanted to tell my wife or kids no. We all only get one life and I want them all to live it without any regrets, be able to have the things they want, and go the places they want to go. Life is to short. Since having this job my wife works part time as a substitute teacher, part time at a floral shop, and picks up any side work she can do while the kids are in school. My wife's full time job though is as the caregiver for our children. She makes sure they get to school, sporting events, church activities, Dr appointments, and many other

things. My wife is part time so our kids can do what they want and receive what they deserve. I could not do it without her! I would like to add that my wife does all this and is a disabled veteran. With the recent announcement about Logan Correctional Center my wife now is worried she will have to get a full-time job and we both question how we are ever going to be able to take care of all our kids and activities going on top of if we were to have another child. WE COULDN'T!

With the recent proposal of closing Logan Correctional Center my 2 oldest stepchildren understand things and hear things. My stepchildren realize and see I am not home often but understand its for them, there wellbeing, and their futures! They understand I make it to every little event I can for them! Just some of the tear jerker questions my step children have asked me now that they have herd Logan Correctional Center could close include, "Seth does this mean your going to be home even less then you already are," "Seth do you think your going to be able to come to anymore of my baseball games, trapshooting events, wrestling matches, band competitions," "Seth are we going to have to start selling all our stuff," "Seth are we going to have to move and go to a different school," "Seth are you going to be able to make my senior year football games since I got Drum Major on the high school band." HOW DO YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS TO A CHILD. It melts me from the inside out that I cannot answer these questions because I don't know what the future holds for my career, where am I going to be working at, and or am I going to be traveling long ways to keep my current role as a Correctional Lieutenant or am I going to loose thousands of thousands of dollars a month/year to take a voluntary reduction in pay to stay close. None of these options are good options and options we didn't ask for!

Closing Logan Correctional Center would be detrimental to my family, many friend, community, county, and surrounding counties. Let us not forget closing Logan Correctional Center would not just be a loss for the staff but also many of the individuals in custody. Under 40% of Logan is from Northern Illinois what about the other 60% that have families south that already have to drive 2-4hrs to see their loved ones that are incarcerated at Logan. Now are you going to make them drive anywhere from 4-6hrs one way to just see them? There is assistance already in Northern Illinois monthly we have a bus that brings children and their family Logan CC called Mommy and Me so they can visit. There is no such assistance like this coming from southern Illinois. Now it will just be harder on them. Also, to add there is limited staff through out the Department of Corrections trained to deal with the Women in Custody at Logan along with the transgender population. We have been put through numerous hours of training on how to deal with the diverse population of individuals in custody we have. It would take years for every staff at a different facility to be put through the training we have been through. It takes years of experience on how to deal with our population from many of the staff we gain from other facilities you will hear how much different it is from a men's facility. You will also hear staff that leave our facility to go to other facilities say they will never go back to Logan cause of the population we deal with. This career is already one that is not for everybody, but you are trying to split up and close the facility that holds your most diverse staff through out the whole dept. If Logan closes and the Individuals in Custody go elsewhere, in times past what happened with

Dwight CC closing the staff assaults skyrocketed and suicide attempts went up from the individuals in custody. We don't need a rewind of this again.

In closing I ask that you consider keeping Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln IL and rebuilding on the current grounds we have. Lincoln is a dying town and this would impact so many people that work at the facility and so many more that do not. We as a whole ask you to keep our children and families in your thoughts when you make a decision of our fate for Logan and just ask yourself some of the questions I listed above that my step children asked me and hear that from your own children's mouths. How would you feel if they came to you with that scared voice and how would you answer them when you don't know your own fate? Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Seth Bramwell

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Conditions at Logan are "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population." A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population" and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has "crumbling infrastructure," with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the "aging" heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan's buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen

mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships. Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have

been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and

strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency. It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Wenceslao Garcia

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2244 South Homan Avenue,  
Chicago, Illinois 60623

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May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
Attn: Facility Closure  
802 Stratton Building  
Springfield, IL 62706  
[Facilityclosure@ilga.gov](mailto:Facilityclosure@ilga.gov)

Dear Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

I am writing in opposition to the proposed closure and relocation of Logan Correctional Center in Logan County to Will County. I believe we do need a new facility that is more modern, but it can be built right here on Logan grounds or on the hundreds of acres that surround Logan CC owned by the state.

I am the Re-Entry Counselor at Logan Correctional Center. I have 14 years in with the state and 3 at Logan CC. I started my career with the Department of Juvenile Justice at IYC Joliet and was there when the closure happened in 2013. I have been through a closure and know the devastation that can happen with employees and their families. As much as the Department of Corrections wants to say they will minimize the disruption in staff lives, there is no doubt that having to drive another 40 - 97 miles one way to work every day IS a disruption. That is 80 - 194 miles a day, approximately 1:26 - 2:50hrs a day I would spend driving if I were to transfer from Logan and not be able to transfer to Lincoln (next door). The demotion I would have to take and let's not add up the gas bill that would increase tremendously. I no longer could put my child on the bus or pick her up before her afterschool care closes, costing me even more to find childcare that opens early and has late hours. When livelihoods are made and abruptly changed, there is stress and tension that families will go through. Less time with your children, spouse and family, less money in the account, higher bills, etc. There are multiple staff here that both incomes come from Logan CC. Can you image having both household incomes being minimized because of demotions or worse yet, no paycheck at all.

IDOC has stated that almost all of Logan CC staff will have a job within a 90-mile radius of Logan. When looking at the staffing report that was sent in, this is untrue. This is untrue due to the job titles employees hold. For my job title, there is one vacancy within those facilities, and I do not hold the seniority to take it. There are other titles that each facility only has one position such as Clinical Services Supervisor, Executive II, Executive Secretary and more and those are taken. This would cause demotions and/or layoffs due to some staff not having previous titles they were certified in. There has been no hiring freeze, so all the facilities are still filling vacant spots. For instance, Lincoln CC has three Counselor positions posted, an Administrative Assistant position along with a Shift Supervisor position. This will eliminate multiple positions for Logan staff to have available when the time comes.

When it comes to Stateville, there have been no numbers given on the vacancies at the Northern Reception Center (NRC). IDOC has stated that NRC can absorb almost all of the Stateville

staff, which means that NRC is severely understaffed. Stateville has a higher vacancy rate than Logan already and when the proposed facility is built there will be four times the number of individuals in custody with no staff, due to NRC absorbing them. A quote from the Dwight CC closure from IDOC is “Historically, Pontiac and Stateville Correctional Center experience the highest rates of attrition in headcount compared to any other facilities across the state.” This has not changed. Alongside Stateville and NRC already being understaffed, Joliet Treatment Center has a 56% security vacancy rate. The number of individuals showing up to screenings I have been told is significantly less up north. What is the plan to hire staff for this facility because from what I hear at Logan CC, is that no one plans to move to Will County. I lived there, worked there and came home when IYC Joliet closed, and I do not plan to go back. You then have staff that are willing to work at a prison out of a job and a new prison with no staff. With the highest attrition rate there will be no consistency and that is what the individuals at Logan truly need.

I truly need an explanation of why Will County is more beneficial than Logan County. As stated before, I am the Re-Entry counselor at Logan. Looking at our data, 31.4% (54 out of 172) of our parole violators from April 2023 – April 2024 are from Cook (43) and the collar counties (11) (Lake, Will, Dupage, Kane). There are 102 counties in Illinois, 5 counties that IDOC says have the best resources are returning the most individuals to custody. Out of 287 individuals at Logan that have committed their crime in Cook County, only 15 of them are non-violent crimes. What are the resources to stop the violence? We have 15 parolees from Cook County that are AWOL currently, and 8 from the other 101 counties. Cook County has the most state paid halfway houses for women to reside, so we have many that end up in Cook County that do not want to go there, only because they don’t want to be in prison anymore. The state needs to pay for resources outside of Cook County to assist the individuals who are from south of I-80. This includes housing and drug rehabilitation programs.

The department says that programming would be better with newer technology. Is that not available if the facility is in Logan County? They also speak of the colleges that are in Chicago that do programming at Logan and Stateville. These colleges do not want to drive down to central Illinois, but would another college that is closer to here want to? When listening to the audio of the initial meeting, it seems as though no one has told the colleges and universities in central Illinois how to request a program. There are multiple colleges in Central Illinois, such as, Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, University of Illinois, UIS – Springfield, Heartland Community College, Illinois Central College, Bradley University, Lincoln Land Community College, Parkland College, and Millikin University. Have any of these colleges and universities been reached out to, to see if they would like to provide programs? Maybe they provide the same programs and would do in-person.

The Department says that reunification with children and family is a very important part of re-entry into society from incarceration. I need an explanation of why moving to one corner of the state provides an equal opportunity for reunification when only 30% of our population is from there? There is an abundance of counties that are well over 4hrs from Stateville and we were

told we cannot replace in-person visits with video visits. I hope this direction does not change to eliminate an issue with moving the facility north.

I would like to elaborate on drive time and overtime. First, I want to explain what I say is immediate overtime. Immediate overtime is leaving roll call, getting in a van, driving to a courthouse and driving back without getting out of the vehicle. This does not include prepping an individual in custody and getting them in the vehicle, sitting in court and bringing the individual back inside the facility. There are 30 counties from Stateville CC that cause immediate overtime and only 2 from Logan CC with one only being 2 minutes. There needs to be consideration on the counties also, they bring their individuals to Logan CC for intake, so this would cause them overtime. There are multiple counties from Stateville that the immediate overtime is over 3 hours and some almost 4 hours. This makes well over 11 hours on the road just to drive back and forth. Doing this will no doubt cause disruption and stress on the staff at Stateville when a writ can possibly end up being 16 hours on the road and sitting in a courthouse. Has IDOC included the higher staffing levels or overtime for this issue? Can the current number of staff cover 35-75 court writs and medical furloughs a week?

Logan CC staff are the most flexible staff in the state. When looking at any closure and moving a large number of individuals in custody to another facility, statistics show that staff assaults and individuals in custody fights rise. Logan staff have already overcome this issue. Logan staff have overcome construction being done all over the facility at all different times and areas. So why can't it be rebuilt here? Logan staff have successfully followed all of IDOC's new policies and procedures to the best of our ability, such as the facility having multiple gender identities and sexualities and multi-level security individuals. Logan CC has an extremely high population who are Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI), moving and completely changing their routine could end up being a horrible disaster. Does IDOC have a plan to train four times the current amount of Stateville staff who have never dealt with this population? Does IDOC expect these individuals to conform to staff that do not understand the population and expect to not have issues from day one of a transfer?

I also want to question the reasoning behind not explaining #8 in the Logan recommendations letter from IDOC which is – Ability of the current and potential communities to provide the infrastructure to support functions and employees. In this section all that was talked about was race. Why? The definition of infrastructure per the Oxford Dictionary is “the basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise. Nothing in that definition talks about race and nothing in their recommendation explains why it can't be rebuilt at Logan and/or in Logan County. I don't understand why race truly matters. All individuals in custody are treated equal. But IDOC left out that there are African Americans that live in Logan County. Why? Based on the last U.S census, there are 5.3% of Logan County that are Black/African American. And 87% that are White/Caucasian. This information is easy to find by looking at the US government census website. They make it seem as though there are no minorities that work at Logan CC. There are 7.2% of our staff that are black/African American, and this does not include our Health Care staff or Drug Education staff. Adding these would increase this percentage. Logan CC's

individual in custody population has 50.90% White and 36.9% Black/African American. The current rate of intakes that are Black/African American is lower than the current intakes that are White/Caucasian. IDOC does not to my knowledge decline applicants because of their race, which means that all are welcome to apply. IDOC has stated in this closure that driving 90 miles one way is not a burden and should not be a problem. Springfield is only 25 miles away, Peoria is only 46 miles away, Bloomington is only 40 and Decatur is only 37 miles away and the Black/African American population is higher in those communities. According to IDOC, it would not be a disruption to apply and work at Logan CC due to it being less than a 90-mile drive one way.

There is no answer to why the rebuild cannot be at Logan CC or somewhere in the county the state owns hundreds of acres of land in. They say they want to look at other countries and states prison to build a modernized prison. I did a Google search of prison floor plans and the first one that shows up is a great plan. The plan would need to be expanded to house the number of individuals in custody in Illinois, but if staff were included in the “how can we do this” there are so many options staff can add because we work here daily. The first plan that came up is the Storstrøm Prison in Denmark. It is very modernized and as the Re-Entry Counselor, I believe it would have a positive impact on the individuals in custody. There is a way that this can be done in Logan County.

There are so many questions IDOC will not give an answer to, if they even have them. They say moving the facility will not cause major disruptions to Logan County and the number of jobs that will be created in Will County will be exponential. Looking at the numbers the data says there will be 3,327 construction jobs created in Will County. IDOC does not employ 3,327 construction staff at facilities which means this is a temporary job rise. The economy goes back to what it was before the reconstruction, while Logan County takes the hit forever. Why is this ok? Will County already has a population of approximately 700,000 people, this will not add more. All this does is devastate the lives of people in Logan County and the surrounding counties. We need answers on why? Why does IDOC think this is ok? Why does IDOC think it is ok that Logan CC staff will start transferring out to other agencies to get away from the unknown? This then leaves Logan CC even more short staffed. Is that safe? We need answers. We need to know what will happen. We need to know how much our lives will be disrupted. Do we need to search for other jobs? Do we need to start working as much overtime as physically possible to save money before we lose our job because we can't make a 90-mile one way drive to work?

Thank you for your time and I hope you can get the answers we so desperately need.

Kaleena Fish  
Correctional Counselor 3 – Re-Entry  
kaleenafish@gmail.com

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My name is Terry Smith. I am employed at Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln, IL. I have worked here for the last 6 years. I came here after working twenty-six years for a company that has closed. Although retirement could be an option for me in the next 5 years, my plan is to work longer until health or circumstances make that impossible.

I was born in Lincoln and have always made this my home. I have fully raised 2 generations of children here. I enjoy those children, grandchildren, and now even great-grandchildren and their families. All but 1 live in this community or nearby. To relocate for a change in employment would be a hardship not only for myself, but also many of them. While I live within a 10-minute drive of Logan Corrections I am able to help them with drop off or pick up to schools and daycares. My daughter is able to live at home while she attends college.

With the previous closures of LDC, Glass Factory, 2 colleges, various small businesses, and the pending closure of Eaton Corporation, the impact of Logan Correction closing and moving would be devastating to our community. Many families will need to relocate to be able to support their families.

It is so sad to know they are asked to give up their homes they have made or built, their ties to the community, family, neighbors and friends, their personal healthcare doctors, their family churches, the safety that a small town provides with lower crime rates, their schools and daycares, and the places they have chosen to raise their families. All of this so the northern part of Illinois will have more income. Since when has the important part of living become money and politics instead of family and communities?

Another option would be to possibly drive up to an hour and a half to work, leaving home at 5:30 a.m. in order to be at work by 7:00 a.m., returning home at 4:30 p.m. each day. That is an eleven-hour day that I am paid 7 ½ hours for. These days being longer in the wintertime and in bad weather conditions.

I, like many, live on a budget. This provides for a home mortgage, car payment, utilities, food, gas, taxes, and insurances; no credit cards or large purchases. To add the expense of more gas, more oil changes, auto upkeep and repairs, increase in car insurance for higher mile usage, two meals in eleven or more hours, extra days off to get to appointments in my area (doctor, dental, optometrist, vet, etc.). With just those added expenses, I could not live on this budget. For some; there would also be the cost of a second daycare. As the only licensed daycare facility in town (that most use) is not open for all eleven of those hours. I cannot even imagine what a tow bill would cost for 1 ½ hours away should my car break down.

If I would have to relocate too far away from my current location, why not to a bordering state with lower taxes, better pensions, lower property rates, less crime, better weather, and politicians that care about the entire state, not just the part they live in?

There is over 150 acres of ground that Logan Correction sits on. Over 90 acres that is empty space. The previous Lincoln Developmental Center is also state owned with large unused ground. Logan County does not lack in wasted space. What we do need most are jobs to support our family. To give more jobs to the northern part of the state, while bankrupting the mid and lower parts of the state makes no sense at all.

Logan Corrections is fully staffed and trained as the only women's medium/maximum facility in Illinois. All programs, education and vocation are run by our professional staff that are already trained to meet all the needs of the women incarcerated here.

To move Logan so far north would mean many of the individuals in custody will not have visitors as often or at all like they do now being centrally located. These visitors are an important reminder to the individuals in custody of the reason they want to do better and return home. We are not just a warehouse for criminals. We need to make a difference.

Every day at Logan is the uncertainty of when our facility will close. Many are looking for other jobs, not knowing if they will have to move their families from their homes. Others are trying to decide how they will pay for the extra expense of driving further and struggling with time being away from their families longer.

Logan County has sacrificed many businesses already. Closing Logan CC will create empty houses and empty businesses. Who could afford to buy them with the dying economy this will add to in Logan County?

Logan Corrections has been here since 1978. Many of the original historic buildings were built in the 1870's. They have been neglected and under-funded for many years. Now we will have to pay the price for the money going elsewhere when we had no control over it. Of course, the buildings are weak and falling down- but we are not. As Logan employees we are united, capable of great things, dedicated and strong. We are asking you to rebuild in Logan County. We aren't asking to take anything from Statesville. We are asking you to let us keep our homes, our families, and our jobs intact. We are not just Logan County. We are Illinois. Make our community count as much as any other in our state. Our state is only as strong as our smallest town and our weakest person. Rebuild in Logan County. Let's make Illinois a state that knows what's important- the people that live here.

Terry Smith

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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Kayla Shull. I was employed at Logan Correctional Center from July 23, 2012, until August 31, 2023. Logan Correctional Center is a maximum-security Prison located in Lincoln, IL. Although I do not work at Logan Correctional Center anymore, I am still against it closing. It would not make sense for it to close for the Individuals in Custody, the Employees, or residents of Logan County. Logan County has already had too many jobs lost which is starting to make a negative impact on the community. LDC closed on August 31, 2002, with 700 employees let go which made an economic impact of \$85.4 million. Lincoln College Closed on May 13, 2022, with 300 employees let go which made an economic impact of \$53 million. Lincoln Christian University closed with 100 employees let go which made an economic impact of \$17.7 million. If Logan Correctional Center closes with an estimated 455 employees let go, it is estimated to have a \$61 million negative impact on the town of Lincoln. Lincoln, Illinois can't afford to keep losing jobs.

The property/land is already available for rebuilding at 1096 1350<sup>th</sup> Ave in Lincoln, IL which is where Logan Correctional Center sits now. There is plenty of room to rebuild. There is no reason to move the Prison back to the Chicago area. The female individuals in custody were housed at Dwight CC until March 11, 2013, because Dwight CC was also in dire need of updates it closed. The state should take a better approach at upkeep and keeping prisons maintained. The budget for prisons is so tight that nothing can ever be fixed properly.

At the CGFA hearing at the capital on May 10, 2024, the main point for the closure is that "Northwestern College, has classes in the northern area of the state which aren't available to the population at Logan CC". Northwestern is Governor Pritzker's Alma Mater. The law school is literally named after him. Northwestern also has a law class that tries to overturn convictions nationwide. During the "COVID-19" pandemic everything was taught online. My children had to be taught via Webex and Zoom. I don't understand why Webex can't be considered for the individuals in custody. There are other towns, villages, and cities in Illinois besides Chicago! Uprooting families who depend on the benefits and pay for their job all so individuals can have better services is very selfish.

During my 11 years of service as a Correctional Officer at Logan Correctional Center, I was assigned to many court writs and medical furloughs. Logan Correctional Center is housed in Lincoln, IL which is in the central part of the state. There were times we would be in the vehicle transporting the female individual in custody to Golconda IL for court which is roughly 4 hours one way from Logan CC. That is 8 hours in a vehicle round trip not including on how long court was in session. If the prison is moved to Joliet and an individual has court in Golconda that will be a 6-hour drive one way and that is not including the road construction and traffic. The only other female Prison in Illinois is in Decatur. It is a minimum-security prison. It is in the middle of an apartment complex. Male individuals in custody move to other prisons so they can transfer the males to their court writs and medical furloughs. Decatur CC would not be able to transport most of the female population at Logan CC because they do not fit the criteria to be housed in a minimum-security prison. These are just a few reasons why Logan should not close.

Respectfully,

Kayla Shull

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I oppose the closure of Logan Correctional Center and building it at Stateville. Please rebuild the facility in Logan County! Thank you.

Renee Martin

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement. For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among

correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Conditions at Logan are “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population.”

A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population” and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has “crumbling infrastructure,” with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the “aging” heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a

civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships. Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Charlotte Green

[charlotteg588@gmail.com](mailto:charlotteg588@gmail.com)

606 N. Willis Ave.

Champaign, Illinois 61821

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I am the Wexford Healthcare Director of Nursing at Logan and have worked at this facility for 8.5 years. I live in Logan County and chose to work at Logan as it was closer to home. I had previously been commuting to and from Springfield daily. My husband also just recently began his corrections career at Lincoln CC. Rebuilding Logan in a different county 2 hours from here would negatively impact my family as I would not be able to make the commute daily, nor am I able to relocate due to my husband's new position. There are many families that will be negatively impacted by the closure of Logan. Not just the staff who work here, but for the individuals in custody as well. Logan is a central location and many families who live in the surrounding areas would be negatively impacted by a move further North. Putting more strain on the families trying to visit and on the individuals themselves if their families are unable to make the commute. The mental health of the individuals will also be negatively affected by this move. A new location, unknown staff, and moving them farther from their families does will negative affect the individuals here at Logan CC. The negative economic effects this closure would have on Logan County are also vast. Lincoln Illinois has lost numerous large employers, and moving Logan CC out of Logan County would have negative consequences for the entire community. Logan Correctional Center should be rebuilt, but it should stay in Logan County.

Thank you,

Shartyse Pumfrey

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,



I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement. For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt. The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

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From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Conditions at Logan are "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population."

A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population" and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has

“crumbling infrastructure,” with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the “aging” heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan. Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

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Hannah Julian  
[hannahjulian35@gmail.com](mailto:hannahjulian35@gmail.com)  
726 Michigan st  
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

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My name is Derek Lohrenz. I am a Correctional Lieutenant at Logan Correctional Center. I am forty years old with an eleven year old daughter who attends school in Lincoln. Everything I have done and the goals I have accomplished have been for her. In seven years she will be going to college, and I worked hard to promote to Lieutenant for that reason. Closing Logan and moving it up north would mean that I would either have to travel back and forth to a different facility, or possibly to stay in Lincoln I would have to step back down to an officer after having worked hard to get where I am today. Either way it's a lose-lose situation for me. I will lose money that I have worked hard to earn for her, and I will lose out on time spent with her. It is also a potential loss for her if I have to remove her from the school and all her friends that she has had since pre-school. The whole situation carries with it a lot of frustration and worry. At Logan Correctional Center, I currently assist in teaching a class titled Creating Regulation and Resistance: Effective Communication with Justice-Involved Women. This is a 40 hour training class that Governor Rauner signed into law stating that is mandatory for anyone who works in the women's division to be properly trained in this particular professional communication technique. To move this class 3 hours north of Lincoln would mean that entire facility staff would have to be trained in this class. The state would have to spend the time and resources to train all new staff members. And, as a trainer in this class and as someone who has worked with the female population for almost nine years, I will refuse to teach someone else how to do my job. I have lived in Lincoln my entire life. I have witnessed the closing of Lincoln Developmental Center, several businesses come and go over the years, and more recently the closing of both Lincoln College and Lincoln Christian University. I have seen firsthand how the closure of facilities like this affects families and communities. I never thought this would be something I would have to worry about, but here we are. The politicians up north, don't see this personal side of these decisions they make. They don't see how the money they want for big cities

gets funneled away from the small communities, and the families and community get left in the dust. A new facility could be built right here in Logan County, where it is a centralized location for all the individual's in custody families to visit. And the staff, the community of Lincoln, and the families of the Individuals in Custody, would not be detrimentally affected.

Lieutenant Derek Lohrenz  
Assistant TACT Commander  
Logan Correctional Center  
217-735-5581  
[derek.lohrenz@illinois.gov](mailto:derek.lohrenz@illinois.gov)

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My name is Wendy Engelhardt and I am the Assistant Warden's Secretary at Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln, Illinois. I am writing regarding the pending closure/relocation of Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln, Illinois. As a resident of Lincoln for 32 years, a State of Illinois employee for 18 years and a Logan Correctional Center employee for 13 ½ years, I'm asking that you reconsider relocating the women's facility to Crest Hill, Illinois, and choose to rebuild Logan Correctional Center here in Lincoln. The closure/relocation of Logan Correctional Center will have devastating effects for the community of Lincoln and surrounding communities. Not only will the economic effects of this decision have a direct impact on the businesses of Lincoln, but there will also be an economic impact on those larger businesses from surrounding cities that are contracted to do work at Logan Correctional Center. If you choose to rebuild the women's facility in Crest Hill, Illinois, the department will use businesses that are located in northern Illinois.

Lincoln has recently lost both Lincoln Christian College and Lincoln College. If you choose to rebuild the women's facility in Crest Hill, Illinois, the approximately 500 employees that will be displaced and required to drive long distances to work will be spending their hard-earned money in other communities, which could prove to be devastating for the small business of Lincoln and Logan County. They could choose to purchase their morning coffee in another town, they could choose to stop at the store on their way home from work in another town, they could pick up dinner in another town and they could choose to send their child(ren) to daycare in another town. Do you see the "ripple effect" that this decision will have on the community of Lincoln?

I ask that you consider the devastating impact that the closure/relocation of Logan Correctional Center will have on the hundreds of employees that work there and their families. Although the Department is saying that there are enough vacancies for all of us that will be displaced by the closure/relocation of Logan Correctional Center, there's a good chance that these vacancies could be at a facility 60 – 90 miles from our home, requiring us to add another 2-3 hours of drive time to our day. The financial burden of that is more than some are able (or willing) to bare. My heart breaks for the young parents and single parents that I work with that would have to spend even less time with their children and families because the department believes a one-way commute of 90-miles

is acceptable. And let's not forget about the small children that will have to spend another 2-3 hours in daycare each day while their parents are traveling to and from work.

Lastly, Logan Correctional Center is the state's only receiving and classification facility for women. Logan Correctional Center is a multi-level security female facility and the fact that it is centrally located within the state makes visits with family members easier for ALL individuals in custody. Relocating the women's facility in Crest Hill, Illinois, would only make family visits easier for those individuals in custody that are from northern Illinois, thus making visits more difficult for the individuals in custody from other areas throughout the state of Illinois.

I ask that you not only think of the individuals in custody at Logan Correctional Center, but also think of the approximately 500 staff and their families and how the plan for closure/relocation of Logan Correctional Center will negatively affect the lives of everyone involved.

In conclusion, I'm asking that you rebuild Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln, Illinois, on the grounds that it currently occupies.

Sincerely,

Wendy Engelhardt  
Executive Secretary I  
Logan Correctional Center

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

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The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These

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Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers. From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

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systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

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A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population” and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has “crumbling infrastructure,” with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the “aging” heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

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By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

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Illinois Alliance for Reentry and Justice

[avalon.betts-gaston@ilarj.org](mailto:avalon.betts-gaston@ilarj.org)

3015 E. New York Street, #A2-163

Aurora, Illinois 60504

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Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

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Fernanda Ponce

[fponce@uchicago.edu](mailto:fponce@uchicago.edu)

8016 S Kolmar Ave

Chicago, Illinois 60652

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The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people



out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

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At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

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For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the

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Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

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Sally Stephens

[sallystephensworks@gmail.com](mailto:sallystephensworks@gmail.com)

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Springfield, Illinois 62711

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I am an employee of Wexford Health at Logan Correctional Center. I work in the mental health department on the Residential treatment unit with our seriously mentally ill population. I believe that Logan Correctional Center should be kept in Logan County for the best interest of our population, our employees, and the surrounding community.

First, I would like to address my reasons for believing that Logan County is the best place for our population. The staff at Logan are the very best at what we do. Our security staff, health care staff, mental health staff, and others in the facility have had extensive gender responsive training and mental health training. Training that would need to be repeated with any new staff to work with this population. Our population at Logan is unique, we house and care for intake, segregation, mental health, severely mentally ill, general population, pregnant individuals, transgender individuals, and those who are aging and disabled. If this population were to face a significant change in staff as a result from being relocated, I believe it would be detrimental and dangerous for the population and the staff. The population has formed relationships with the staff here. On many occasions it is only that existing relationship that aids in the diffusion of extreme situations and high emotions for some of these individuals. The bottom line is these individuals know us and we know them. Losing those relationships is going to result in increased staff assaults, uses of force, and instances of self-harm or suicide.

Next, I would like to discuss how the relocation of our facility would affect myself and my immediate family. I personally have invested seven years of hard work into my career and my patients at Logan Correctional Center. I am only one member of my immediate family that works here at Logan. My brother, my sister, and my sister-in-law are all employed here as well. This is our livelihood; this is how we provide for our children. Most of all, working at Logan together keeps my immediate family located in the same area. We have family dinner once a week because we live close together. We can raise our children together. If Logan Correctional Center were to be relocated north some of my family would have to relocate to keep our jobs. That would mean that we would no longer have the opportunity to sit around a table together every week, our children would be raised apart from one another, and the support system we have built to manage our own mental well-being while working in this challenging environment would no longer be 5 minutes away. I know that this situation is not unique to my family. As one of the largest employers in the area many families have multiple family members employed at Logan. Many families are going to face separation. Some families, like my brother's family- face losing the only source of income for their home.

Finally, I want to address some of the reasons I believe relocating Logan Correctional Center is wrong for our community and Logan County. The residents of Logan County have already faced the closure of Lincoln College and Lincoln Christian University. As another large employer in the area Logan Correctional is vital to the survival of this community. Many of our employees live in the area, or commute from a short distance away. This results in a huge amount of revenue for our town. Stores,

restaurants, gas stations and many more will lose income vital to their survival if these employees are forced to work outside of Logan County.

Logan Correctional Center belongs in Logan County. It is the wrong choice for our population, our staff, and our community to move north.

Amber Hickey-Allen

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I am writing this not only on a professional side, but also on a personal level. In my role as the Fire Chief I obviously have granted more inside information into the condition and issues that face Logan Correctional Center. My agency responds weekly to calls at the facility ranging from towers on fire due to a lightning strike, to inmates having medical issues. Beyond the normal calls, we also receive a yearly inspection from the Fire Marshalls office and do yearly tours. It is definitely a significant understatement to say that the facility is in rough shape. I also do not think it is out of line to say that the state has drastically failed the facility for years. While yes, it is a 100 year old facility, there has most certainly been a lack of addressing repairs that have been needed for some considerable amount of time. I guess I would consider it a perfect storm situation, when repairs are not done with a facility of its age, there is only one thing that can happen and that is continued deterioration. From a life safety stand point the condition of many of the buildings have the potential to be disastrous if a fire would occur. With holes in ceilings, fire alarm systems that do not work amongst other failures that have been sited for years on the Fire Marshalls reports. Year after year the facility fails and mostly with the same things, some going as far back as 2017. That shows the lack of follow through the higher power has shown this institution for years. I have nothing from the fire district side to lose by the closing of this facility other than less calls. Being a state facility, its not like we will lose any tax dollars or benefit of having it. But it does raise one concern and you have to look no further than LDC. I will now have an entire campus of buildings that are now unmanned and unprotected from people wanting to go in and fool around and also a huge fire load that will no longer have water going to the hydrants or fire pumps. These items are just a recipe for disaster, even with staff being next door at Lincoln Correctional, they have their own facility to watch over. What will stop people from getting in there and putting themselves and buildings at risk. It is a prison after all and has been fortified to keep people in, but with no one manning it, it suddenly becomes inviting to get into it for others.

Now on the personal side of things I have had IDOC as a part of my life for my entire life. My dad worked 20 plus years at Logan CC and retired from there as an officer. My wife currently works there and I believe is around 11 years under her belt. My wife started out as an officer and was great at her job. When we decided to start a family, as she put it, one of us had to have the grown up or stable schedule. She then transferred to the records office where she has worked for the last 4ish years. With the announcement of the closure and presumed movement of the facility this puts my family at great concern. Due to my job, we are pretty much stuck where we are in Logan County. To be honest I wouldn't want to move away anyways at this point. In the Governors statement it said with all of the surrounding facilities that all Logan CC employees should be able to keep their employment. Well there seems to be a pretty big difference between keeping employment and keeping their job. My wife and her supervisor pretty much run the records department, so if her counterparts at another facility already have those positions filled, then I guess she doesn't have that option. So if that option is not available

then what, take a demotion to a lesser paid position. Not to mention if she cant get a spot at Lincoln CC, now there is a commute involved. So less money earned and more expenses just to get to work. I wish somebody could explain why the powers that be seem to want to show more caring and worrying about the inmates in the facility than the people who put themselves out there to operate these facilities. While I am one that I believe the inmates should be treated with respect, at the end of the day they are the ones that broke the law and found themselves in the IDOC system. Why treat them with more concern than the staff?

We can all see that Lincoln and Logan County is a dying community. Governor Ryan struck the huge hit many years ago with LDC which took a vast number of jobs away. Now the ironic thing is another governor doing the same thing to the last remaining part of the original LDC. From a logistical side this makes no sense to me. You have the primary women's facility in the state located about as dead center in the state as you can. To me this seems like a massive benefit when it comes to bringing in new inmates or needing to transfer others out on court cases. You will be paying large amounts in OT for personnel having 6-8 hours of just transport time if someone needs to be taken to court in Southern Illinois. Additionally with all the direct routes in and out of the area by interstate, 2 lane, or rail, there are many easy ways for transportation. The report also stated something about the demographic of employees for the facility. Well I may not be the sharpest knife in the drawer, but when large employers, such as the factories and state facilities continue to pull out of the Lincoln area or course people will leave. Good hardworking people work and operate the facility now, why is more importance not given to them. Why does everything with this state have to revolve around whats best for north of I-80. Will County is getting their improvement with a new Statesville Prison. All those that have worked tirelessly with forced OT and chaos of keeping Logan CC running as well as it can. Where is their reward for all they have done? Sorry about your luck, spend more of your hard earned money to travel hours just to get to and from work. This is not what these people signed on for and this is most certainly not what they deserve. I am so disheartened to see downstate, especially my community continue to decline due to decisions by a state system that thinks Northern Illinois is all that matters. If more special services and needs are something they see as important for the new facility, why not make some of these services move to Central Illinois? Losing this many potential jobs is beyond a huge loss for this community, let alone if these employees are able to move elsewhere to continue to be employed. Then the cycle continues to grow worse for Lincoln and Logan County as more people leave. This also then creates the trickle effect for my agency with a decreasing tax base. As a small fire district we are far from having large funds to work with like some of our counterparts in the larger communities. When we start losing taxes from people moving away it will have a lasting effect on our capabilities. I also take into consideration that between the current 2 facilities as well as park properties, there is over 600 acres of state owned land already sitting out there. Add in the fact of the 100's of thousands, if not millions that were just used to completely reconstruct House 41 and add onto House 14 to now just let it rot away. Talk about wasteful spending to make 2 very nice buildings in a campus of crippled buildings. Central Illinois, especially Logan County needs the boost in the arm way more than Will County. It was already stated that Will is a growing county, so why not help a non-growing county? It shouldn't matter whether it is a Democrat or Republican County, the bottom line is to take care of all of the citizens of this state. By moving to Will County all your doing is hurting Logan, Will does not need this facility the way that Logan does. It is not a significant loss for Will if it doesn't materialize for them, but 500 jobs in Logan is a major, major blow. Please feel free to use my words to help to prevent this move from taking place and if there are more emails of people that I need to send this to, please pass them on to me. Thank you for everything you do to continue to support those in Logan County.

**Chris Buse**

Fire Chief  
Lincoln Rural Fire Protection District  
1350 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Lincoln, IL 62656  
Station: 217-732-6697  
Fax: 217-732-3878

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Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

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A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population" and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has "crumbling infrastructure," with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the "aging" heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan's buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations



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Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships. Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children.

These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

[ryan.griffis@gmail.com](mailto:ryan.griffis@gmail.com)

1106 N Spaulding Ave

Chicago, Illinois 60651-4154

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

Dear Commissioners,

I write on behalf of the Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry of Illinois in support of closing Logan Correctional Center. The facility is sorely understaffed, and we wish to see the women incarcerated there directed to services that would address the underlying reasons for the harms they caused and also see our legislators address the legislation that harshly punished them. As I write, IDOC populations are down, and some of the people who are currently locked up should be released already because of sentence credits being applied retroactively for "good time" they have done. As we speak, IDOC remains noncompliant with Public Act 103-1033 mostly because IDOC facilities are so understaffed and cannot handle the volume of paperwork and administration required.

Hear us cry out: "No new prisons!"

Please direct the funds that might be used for building new carceral structures instead toward efforts that prevent and reduce violence: feeding programs, health care (mental and physical), housing opportunities, economic opportunities in neighborhoods that currently have few. Our faith tradition reminds us that no one is outside the circle of love, and our faithful love asks you to close Logan and build no more new structures.

Rev. Allison Farnum, Director  
Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry of IL

Allison Farnum  
[revallisonfarnum@gmail.com](mailto:revallisonfarnum@gmail.com)  
2747 Eastwood Avenue  
Evanston, Illinois 60201

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

Dear all,

I am a historian and a professor who has been teaching in prisons since 2017. I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

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Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

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Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in



interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

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It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Thank you,  
Shireen Hamza

Shireen Hamza  
[shireen5221@gmail.com](mailto:shireen5221@gmail.com)  
5323 S Woodlawn Ave, Apt 1N  
Chicago, Illinois 60615

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To whom it may concern:

My name is Allyson Perschall, and I am a Behavioral Health Technician at Logan Correctional Center. The closure of Logan Correctional Center will have a severe negative impact on myself and my family. The closure will cause a loss of benefits and wages that help support my family. I will also be losing a career that I love and enjoy. Losing Logan Correctional Center in Logan County is going to be a detriment to the town of Lincoln and surrounding towns and counties. Multiple businesses will have to close, and many people will have to leave the area to find work.

The closest correctional center that I would be able to work at would be over 60 miles to commute to and from work every single day. Logan Correctional Center is the ONLY maximum facility for women in the State of Illinois. There is a local train station in Lincoln, making this a central hub for families to visit their loved ones that are incarcerated from anywhere in the state in just a few hours. Logan Correctional Center is also the ONLY facility that has mental health services for women in the State of Illinois. Moving the individuals in custody to a new location will cause instability and harm to their well-being.

Allyson Perschall

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and NEVER rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. Instead of spending money on prisons, we should be investing in resources for communities who have been historically and currently intentionally disenfranchised- going to the root causes of why harm and "crime" happens, instead of locking people up after the fact. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families

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Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC’s plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so. Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and

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FREE THEM ALL, FREE THEM NOW!!!

Erica Bentley

[erocka83@gmail.com](mailto:erocka83@gmail.com)

4442 N Lamon Ave

Chicago, Illinois 60630

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By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

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It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Kathryn Meade

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chicago, Illinois 60615

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All concerned,

The purpose of this statement is to address my beliefs on the closure and relocation of Logan Correctional Center. My name is Wesley Berger. I have been employed at Logan Correctional Center for 14 years. My current title is Correctional Sergeant. I am opposed to the closure and relocation of Logan Correctional Center to Northern Illinois.

I want to begin with some of my work history. For approximately 1.5 years I was the locksmith at Logan Correctional Center. During my tenure as Locksmith, I was involved in many maintenance projects at Logan. I was able to see maintenance from an entirely different perspective because of this.

While I do agree a rebuild is necessary, I do not believe relocation is strategic or well thought-out. This all feels very rushed. The economic impact for Logan County, the city of Lincoln and surrounding areas cannot be disregarded. The city of Lincoln alone has lost Lincoln College, Lincoln Christian College and Kroger's – which was our main grocery store. It goes without saying that relocation would negatively affect everyone who resides within Logan County and surrounding counties – including the individuals we have in our population.

Not only would this have an impact economically, but when you factor logistical aspects in, the problem broadens. Logistically, it makes no sense to relocate a centralized Reception and Classification center to Northern Illinois. I believe some 60% of our population is from Central and Southern Illinois. Being centralized allows our court / medical writs to travel anywhere in the state and return the same day. Moving to Northern Illinois would eliminate this possibility. Staff would double their drive time if they had to drive to southern Illinois. Going back to my maintenance background, think about the state vehicles that are used daily. I could only imagine the cost increases between fleet maintenance and fuel. Overtime, per diem, paid lunches and the overall cost of traveling would increase as well. To add to this, the individuals in custody's families and friends from southern Illinois would have 6-10 hour drive times just to visit. Everyone is already struggling financially and economically. I do not believe it is fair or wise to force this.

The option of driving or moving that far is not an option for many, including me. I could not uproot my life and move. Driving that far is not an option for me. Some of my family members have medical needs. I need to be available if needed. I live on a cattle farm and assist with its management. It would be impossible to do both. This would completely change my quality of life.

Decision-makers need to recognize the human cost of their decisions and consider alternative solutions that don't place such burden on employees and their families. The implications of travel, accommodations, meals will add up quickly, especially if commuting and maintaining a separate residence. Keeping a centrally located R&C facility makes the most logistical sense.

Moving up north would also impact deputies and transfers immensely. This increase in drive time would put a substantial strain on county deputies and the individuals being transferred. It would be a long drive for the individual, but when you factor in the deputies you must consider the overtime, meals, fuel, vehicle maintenance and overall health of the deputies.

I recommend we keep Logan at its current location and rebuild. We are centrally located. Relocation is not logical. Rebuilding our facility at the current location is 100% an option. There is more than enough property to rebuild at the current location. Our facility is set up as two sides. We have a high side and a low side. It is totally viable that we could close the high side while the low side continues standard operations and tear down the high side to make the much-needed infrastructure repairs. New X or K houses could be erected. Once the high side is complete, the low side could do the same. This would meet the needs of all and undoubtedly increase the overall welfare of staff and individuals.

You must also consider the staff currently. We have specialized training regarding the diverse female population we have. The gender inclusive training, trauma, crisis training, mental health training and rapport with the individuals is substantial. When we first received the female population, the staff assaults and issues were increasing by the day. Once we were properly trained and grew a rapport with the individuals, this changed completely. Imagine training a new workforce with the female population. The same issues are going to occur. The staff at Logan are specially trained for this atmosphere.

I would like to end with this – Race should never have been a factor in this decision or the statements that were put out. It makes no logical sense to include race when comparing the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest metropolitan area to the small county of Logan. You're reaching. If you've ever been to a big city, you're going to see a large amount of diversity. If we can't staff both facilities currently, how in the world are you going to staff two facilities in the same county? The thought of building two facilities in 3 to 5 years is insane, especially for under a billion dollars.

Respectfully,  
Sergeant Wesley Berger  
Illinois Department of Corrections  
Logan Correctional Center

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Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

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Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and

incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

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Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

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Anand Venkatkrishnan

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A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population” and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has “crumbling infrastructure,” with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the “aging” heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships. Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Richard Bilik

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through

our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic

systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Conditions at Logan are "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population."

A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population" and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has "crumbling infrastructure," with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the "aging" heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan's buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

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It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Loren Mindell

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My name is Kimberly Baker. I am a Qualified Mental Health Professional at Logan Correctional Center. I will be negatively affected by Logan closing as I will be losing my job which I really enjoy. Since coming to Logan in January, I have gotten to know many of the Individuals in Custody. These ladies are each unique and special. It has been a joy getting to know them and seeing them grow in this short time. Many of them have expressed concern an anxiety about moving. Some things that they have discussed include the uncertainly about when this will happen and what the new prison will be like, the ability of families to make an even longer trip from southern and central IL to the Joliet area, saying goodbye to staff that they have worked with and consider supportive and being separated from friends on their housing units, some of which have known each other since they were at Dwight. Those ladies have expressed concern about going through this process again. The ladies on my housing unit are also concerned they will lose the PAWS program for training service dogs. I believe in mental health it is important to have consistency in therapy. Many of the staff here will not be able to make the move that far away. The other close prison is Lincoln, and they are not big enough to absorb a lot of Logan's staff. This would mean moving to a new community or an extremely long commute, which in the winter is difficult. Regarding a comment made by the governor, we have a pool of talented people to draw from here in central IL. If they are using staffing as a reason to close and move north, why are the prisons up north not fully staffed?

Losing Logan would hurt the community of Lincoln and Logan County. It would be taking away one of the last large job sources here. Lincoln recently lost both colleges and have lost most of the factories that were here. This closure will result in people needing to move to find work, lowering of real estate value due to lack of jobs and closing of other business due to loss of population that supply them with business. This loss will also affect the surrounding counties where workers live.

I would like to see the ladies have a better living environment. There are ways to make that happen here on other property the state owns in the area or by rebuilding on the current site a few buildings at a time.

Kimberly Baker LCPC, C-PD

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My name is Kerin Jones, I am an Account Technician II at Logan Correctional Center (Logan CC). The closure and relocation of Logan CC would greatly impact myself and my family. With Logan CC moving from Logan County, it would put me away from my family for an extended amount of time due to travel. I currently have 14 years before I can retire and planned on working at Logan until then. I am married, and my husband and I have called Logan County our home for more than 30 years. We own our home and raised our children here. My adult children and their families live close by. The furthest being only 30 miles away, but still residing in Logan County. Relocating for me is out of the question. We have been informed that there will be enough positions within a 90-mile radius to employ all of Logan CC's current employees. To expect someone to drive 90 miles one way, to be able to keep their job isn't realistic. That alone would be an additional 11 hours per week away from my family. I currently live 13 miles from Logan CC. To work at any of the other prisons closest to me, it would be a minimum of 50+ miles, and that's if there's an opening for my certifications. Not only the additional time away from my family, but the cost would be an extreme impact. With gas prices continuing to rise, and the cost of wear and tear on a vehicle, it would be a financial burden. Although the closure and rebuilding of Logan CC is needed, relocating it to Northern Illinois isn't the answer.

Moving Logan CC wouldn't only affect myself, but it would be detrimental to our community. Lincoln has already suffered several large business closures. In just the past 6 years Ardagh Group Plant closed in April 2019, Lincoln College closed in May 2022, and Lincoln Christian University is set to close at the end of May 2024. If Logan CC is relocated outside Logan County, that would be another big hit to the community. Small businesses depend on the support of their community to stay open. With Logan's relocation, many of the employees from Logan CC wouldn't be able to spend their money local, due to the hours they would be away from home. They would be shopping close to where they work, or at big box stores, since most small businesses would be closed by the time they got home. Logan CC currently has 464

employees. If even half the employees, could no longer support the small businesses, this could inevitably cause a domino effect, where they also must close their doors. Northern Illinois will remain as the rebuild site of Stateville Correctional Center. Therefore, their community and small businesses will not be negatively impacted. In fact, if they relocate Logan CC there, it will have both employment and financial gain. There is plenty of land available for the rebuild of Logan at the current site. Besides the current location, the state already owns land in the same area that it could be rebuilt on. I'm sure if it was researched, there would be several suitable properties in Logan County to rebuild on.

Individuals in custody, and their families would also be greatly affected. Where Logan sits right now, it is centrally located. Moving the facility up North, would make it a lot harder for several individual's family and friends to be able to visit. Individuals from Southern Illinois would have an additional 151 miles, or 2.5 hours of travel time one way. Not to mention, the additional cost that would be involved to cover fuel and meals. This alone will be a huge burden on the families. Individuals with young children, and elderly loved ones that used to visit, might not be able to make the trip as often, or at all, due to the added distance.

Decatur Correctional Center is the only other women's prison in Illinois. This facility is also centrally located and is currently 39 miles, or 51 minutes from Logan CC. Moving Logan to Northern Illinois by Stateville Correctional Center will add an additional 108 miles or 1hr 29min travel time. All women being admitted into the Illinois Department of Corrections, must go to Logan first for processing. Therefore, all individuals approved to go to Decatur would have to be transported this additional distance. This move would require Correctional Officers transporting to Decatur to be gone for a minimum of 3 hours, when there is already an issue with having enough Correctional Officers and vehicles to cover the scheduled writs we currently have. With there only being two women facilities, it doesn't make sense to move them further apart.

Governor Pritzker has stated "the future for most places across the state isn't to rely on a state-run facility that's a prison", and "it can't be a great economic growth strategy for the area". Although there is truth in these statements, taking away an established facility that is currently providing hundreds of jobs for our area, isn't a great strategy either. Pritzker also stated that our local officials should be focusing on attracting private sector jobs. Even if a private sector business opened in our area, there is no guarantee on how long it would remain open. However, there will always be a need for a woman's prison. Economically, I don't see how Governor Pritzker thinks spending nearly 7 million dollars just to move the individuals in custody is smart financially. If the prisons were to remain open and the rebuilds remain local, that number would drop drastically. Also, the relocating of Logan up North to create a more regional balance for woman's prison isn't accurate. Decatur's total capacity is approximately 700 females all which are minimum security, while Logan's capacity is just under 1400 females and includes minimum to maximum security, along with mental health.

I am grateful that there is a legal mandate to have community hearings before the final decision is made, but as we know COGFA can only advise. The Pritzker administration will not be affected by this, yet they have the final say, and can proceed with their plan since the funding is allocated in the budget.

The reality is employees of Logan CC, individuals in custody, and the surrounding community are the ones that will truly be affected by the unnecessary relocation. The dedicated employees at Logan CC have endured working in the facilities run down state. Therefore, they should also be afforded the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of a brand-new facility without traveling or relocating.

#Keep Logan CC in Logan County!

Kerin Jones

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My name is Lori Ward and I am currently the Accountant Supervisor at Logan Correctional Center (Logan CC) and a citizen of Logan County. I am **opposed** to the proposed plans to rebuild Logan Correctional Center on the property of Stateville Correctional Center in Crest Hill, IL. I have worked for the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) for almost 11 years. I started my career with the Department of Corrections at Lincoln Correctional Center as an Account Tech I, promoted to Account Tech II and then promoted to my current position as Accountant Supervisor here at Logan CC in May 2016. There is only one Accountant Supervisor position at each correctional facility and that position is currently filled at all of the facilities within the 90 mile radius. I find the fact that IDOC and the governor even consider a 90 mile commute an acceptable option for the employees at Logan CC. They obviously have not taken the value of our time with our family and loved ones into consideration. My son is grown but he has Tumefactive Demyelinating Multiple Sclerosis and occasionally struggles with reoccurring symptoms and occasionally needs assistance, being 90 miles or further away from him is not an option.

I have over 5 years before I can retire and my plan since promoting to Logan has been to continue working here until that day comes. My husband has been a member of the Operating Engineers Local 965 out of Springfield for almost 28 years and plans to retire in the next 3 years. We have lived in our current home in rural Logan County for 30 years. Since we are so close to retirement relocating is not an option. If there is not an accountant supervisor position within driving distance of my home at another facility my options would be to commute to the new Logan CC at Crest Hill which according to Google Maps would be a minimum 2 hour 16 minute commute one way or demote to another position that I have been certified in which would be Account Tech II. **IF** Logan CC were to stay open 3 years and I would have to take this demotion it would have a devastating affect on our personal finances. The demotion would result in a \$2,420 monthly cut in pay which is over \$29,000 annually. My husband and I have both worked and continue to work hard to be financially stable when we retire, this would be a huge loss of income for us to overcome as we approach retirement.

I agree with the fact that Logan CC needs to be rebuilt, but I **DO NOT** agree with the rebuild being done on the grounds of Stateville CC. There is no reason for the rebuild not to be done here in Logan County. There's 1000 acres of state-owned ground adjacent to the current location that Logan CC could be rebuilt on. To rebuild Logan CC on this ground, keeping it here in central portion of the state is the only fair and fiscally responsible location. Over 55% of the individual here at Logan CC are from central and southern Illinois. According to google maps, those living in Alexander County, the most southern county in Illinois will have a drive time of 5 hours and 28 minutes one way to see their loved ones if Logan CC is moved to Stateville CC. That does not include time for stops for food, gas and/or restroom breaks. If they have a dependable vehicle, can afford gas and food for the drive, that is a long time for anyone to spend in a car driving in one day but is extremely difficult for the young and elderly. The drive time for these families the come to Logan CC is 4 hours 4 minutes which is longer than the drive time from any of the northern counties. This move discriminates the individual in custody and the families who live in the central and southern counties keeping them from in person visits.

Not only is it discriminating to the individual's in custody and their families, it is discriminating against the southern county taxpayers by creating an additional financial burden on the county's budget. Since we are the only receiving and classification facility for the women's division within IDOC, keeping Logan CC centrally located is the only fair location for all counties. Currently, most counties can transport individuals to Logan CC with minimal or no overtime. Moving the receiving and classification all the way to Stateville CC is going to create a several hours of unnecessary overtime. For safety purposes there are 2 officers in the vehicle when transporting individuals in custody. For instance, Alexandria County will have 2 officers on the road a minimum of 11 hours of just driving time. That doesn't include an estimated 2 hours for necessary stops, lunch and drop off time. So, on transport day the county is going to be short on squad car and 2 officers for a minimum of 13 hours and the county will be paying the officers a minimum of 5 hours of overtime each. This calculation is assuming that the officers are not already working on their day off, then it would be a minimum of 13 hours of overtime each.

The relocation to the northern part of state is fiscally irresponsible in several aspects for the state. The first being the cost to build the new facility is going to be higher in Crest Hill than it would be here in central Illinois. The labor trades in northern Illinois have a higher pay scale and the cost of everything is higher. Secondly, as mentioned above the travel to court writs from Stateville to southern Illinois are going to create overtime. This is not an issue for the male population as a temporary move from the parent facility to a temporary facility closer to the county the writ is located can be planned and done during the weekly transfers as there are multiple male facilities. The women only have the 2 facilities, the second being Decatur

Correctional Center. Decatur has the Mommy and Me program which limits some of the minimum security level population from being housed there and they don't have the security measures needed to safely house those that require medium and maximum level security or the mental health. Here again this is going to create unnecessary overtime and put the individual in custody and 2 officers on the road for 13 hours or longer depending on how long they are in court. Resulting in unnecessary overtime.

Losing Logan CC would have a substantial economic impact on Lincoln and Logan County. I read in the impact study on the COGFA website that the closure would have little impact on the city and county's economy **IF** the current employees continued to reside in the current housing and did not move. As I stated before, driving 90 miles one way to work and being away from your family is not practical. I don't see many employees willing to make the drive daily. They are either going to seek employment elsewhere probably taking a cut in pay or be forced to uproot their families and relocate. If they do stay in their current residence and be forced to drive the 90 mile commute they are not going to be able to put money back in the economy as they have been as they are going to be forced to use their extra money for gas for their vehicles. They won't have the time or money so spend in Lincoln and/or Logan County. When Governor Pritzker was asked about how moving Logan CC would impact the economy here he implied that we should not be expecting economic growth to come from a state agency. My thoughts and response to Governor Pritzker would be "We are not seeking new economic growth from a state agency, we just want to **KEEP WHAT WE HAVE!**"...and why are you promoting economic growth from a state agency in Crest Hill?

My office is in the administrative building and during my 8 year career here at Logan CC my coworkers and I have worked weeks in the summers with no A/C and weeks in the winter with no heat, it has been ongoing issue since I started here. The sewer lines need to be replaced. At the beginning of the COVID lockdown we dealt with sewer water shooting out of toilet, rolling out of the bathroom, down the hallway and into our offices. We were scrambling trying to get everything up off the floor, then we had the pleasure of cleaning and disinfecting everything ourselves. We had a bucket sitting below the bathroom sink for over a year that we carried outside to dump because the sink didn't drain properly. We still have to be observant of the flushing of the toilet and draining of the sink as the issues have only had a band-aid fix. These are just a few of the maintenance issues from the past 8 years. It is no fault of anyone here at Logan CC that permanent repairs have not been done. There's never enough money budgeted to Logan to make all of the needed repairs.

We, the staff here at Logan CC have persevered through many challenges over the years, but we have never given up and have been committed to stay here for the long run. Now all we have to

show for our dedication through all of this to IDOC and Logan CC is for the governor and powers that be at IDOC to decide to rebuild Logan CC 142 miles from its current location to Stateville CC. As we sit here continuing to give our all to our jobs while we and our families live with the stress of not knowing when we will receive a pink slip telling us Logan CC is closing and our lives are abruptly turned upside down. Could be days after these COGFA hearings are over, could be a month, a year, 3 years, 5 years...who knows? All of the statistics given by IDOC of the vacancies within the 90 mile radius are based on today's statistics. Asking the 464 employees currently working at Logan CC to continue to come to work and do our job to keep Logan CC running until the new facility is completed is extremely stressful, unfair, and just wrong. There is no guarantee these vacancies will still be open. The only fair thing to do to guarantee all of the 464 employees a job without disrupting our families and lives is to rebuild Logan Correctional Center in Logan County!!

Lori Ward

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The closure of Logan Correctional Center will affect me and my family in many ways. Logan has been my place of employment for 12 years now. I live in Lincoln, my husband is the Fire Chief of Lincoln Rural FPD that covers our facility, as well as I have small children that attend a daycare in town. We shop locally, we eat locally, as we are a part of this town. With moving the location of the Female R&C to a Northern region this would leave me without my current job. I am an Office Administrator 3 at Logan, and there are only up to two of these within the Records Office at most facilities. If my facility were to relocate it would be out of the possibility for me to relocate as my Husband would not be able to move to accommodate this. As well the potential of him finding a new job that would be as established as he is here is null and void. If I were to take a position at Lincoln, as the individuals that are at the same title as myself have less seniority, I would be putting someone out of a job there as well. This does not seem to be a logical thing to do moving people all around just because someone wants to relocate a facility. No one at this facility, individuals incarcerated or otherwise, would disagree with the fact that this facility needs to be renovated, or rebuilt. The amount of things going wrong out here, and the general lack of upkeep of the facility is astounding. The intentions of Logan CC was to replace the decrepid LDC facility. That facility was also left to rot, and was not kept up back in its time of running. Is it the intention of the state to continue to take up ground space by continuing to take land and build new buildings on it just to not keep up on them? Will this new facility also only be up to date the moment it is built and then be left to disintegrate thereafter?

The undue stress that this is causing me is unreal. I have had to go on Anti-depressants, anxiety meds, and am rapidly gaining weight. I can not go on like this for the next 3 to 5 years. The mental anguish in even having to write this is unreal. It is a very unsettling feeling thinking that you might lose everything, or be made to break up my household for a department that won't support law abiding citizens. The closure of Logan CC would greatly affect all that are incarcerated here, as well as the employees, and the community. As well it would negatively affect all of the Sheriff's offices within the State. It would be a fiscally irresponsible decision to base the Receiving Facility for the Women for the State of Illinois in the Northern part of the State. The amount it would cost in overtime, vehicle deterioration, and the hits it would cause on the state budget would be astronomical. The IDOC budget as well as the local governments budget would be greatly impacted by this change due to all the extra travel time. Within IDOC there are 3 male facilities that the Sheriffs can take their individuals to. By having 3 locations this allows them to not have to travel great distances to deliver their individuals to IDOC. As it stands now it



is a great impact on these counties to have to deliver their individuals to one facility within the center of the state. This drive as it is now takes Alexander County 4 hours to drive. If you were to move to NRC location this drive would then become a 5 and a half hour trip one way. This is not including the time it would take to process the individual in to the facility. This is just the part that will affect the States budget. The families that will be offset by this action would be profound.

I am not able to add any travel time as we have 2 small children that attend a local daycare. I do not have a support system that would be able to assist me in taking care of my children while I was traveling to and from work.

*Rachelle Buse*

**OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR III  
RECORD OFFICE  
LOGAN CORRECTIONAL CENTER**

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My name is Matthew Ohler. I am the Executive Secretary III at Logan Correctional Center. The potential closure of Logan Correctional Center has already brought uncertainty to my and many others' employment. Although I would have employment options within DOC, the closure (or even threat of it) is forcing me to consider jobs further away or potentially outside of the union causing greater transportation time and cost and uncertainty in salary, respectively. While I am confident I could continue employment with DOC in a similar capacity, I have serious concerns that many individuals and their families would be displaced due to the 90-mile radius distance that the department or state has deemed an acceptable replacement. Logan and the surrounding counties have experienced significant job losses over the last few years, and this would exacerbate the area's employment options for quality jobs. These jobs would have a significant trickle-down effect on the businesses in the community and surrounding area as well.

In my experience, the staff at Logan CC have worked tirelessly and admirably for years to keep the facility functioning as well as providing significant programming for the population through numerous adversities, including diverted and under funding. Too often serious maintenance concerns have hindered the ability of the facility to provide proper programming, healthcare, and mental health services, but it is not for a lack of effort of staff. Given the proper funding of a new/updated facility, we would have the opportunity to thrive in all these functions in Logan County.

Individuals in custody whose families travel from significant distance already would see their travel times and costs significantly increase if they are even able to travel these distances. Often, the families must take time or a day off work to visit. Moving the facility from a geographically central area would hinder the ability of families to visit. Additionally, the court writs and medical furloughs would experience significant travel time and expenditure increases.

Thank you,  
Matthew Ohler  
Logan Correctional Center  
Executive Secretary III  
217-735-5581 Ext 3215  
[Matthew.ohler@illinois.gov](mailto:Matthew.ohler@illinois.gov)

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at

Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

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Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships. Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional

Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in

interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

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At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Chanita Jones

[chanitaj@yahoo.com](mailto:chanitaj@yahoo.com)

6807 S Cornell Ave, 3N

Chicago, Illinois 60649

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Thanks,  
Emma Williams

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Samantha Pellegrino

[sleighpe@gmail.com](mailto:sleighpe@gmail.com)

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Evanston, Illinois 60202

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Conditions at Logan are “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population.” A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population” and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has “crumbling infrastructure,” with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the “aging” heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

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The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far

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Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

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Scott Aaseng

[scottaaseng@gmail.com](mailto:scottaaseng@gmail.com)

360 E. Randolph #1402

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Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

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expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Karen Linder

[karenmea4@gmail.com](mailto:karenmea4@gmail.com)

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I am a member of MAMAS. My son was incarcerated in Statesville. During the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, my son told me the water in Statesville was not clean and coming out brown. My son and other people complained about the water, but nothing was done. We had to purchase water and bring it to the prison for my son and the men locked up. We dropped off thousands of bottles of water, even though they have a budget for water and other resources. Statesville should have been closed 30 years ago. The problems aren't new. There have been rodents, rotten pipes, and bugs for a long time. IDOC receives a certain amount of funding from the government to maintain its facilities. But it seems like maintenance isn't happening. I'm not sure what they're planning on building there but the 900 Million dollars should be used to give people better treatment instead of building more torture chambers. Elected officials are maintaining a system that is putting more people behind bars, and that money needs to be used better. Especially for those with very long sentences and wrongfully convicted. There should be investigations to see how the people who have been incarcerated for years have been affected by being in Statesville. They should uncover the impacts on those people and use the money to help heal and restore them from the negative impacts of living in conditions not fit for human beings.

Francisco Ornelas

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I'm glad Statesville and Logan Prisons are closing. They should remain closed. IDOC and prisons destroy our families.

My name is Esther Hernadez. My two sons were wrongfully imprisoned for over 20 years.

While my sons were in Menard Prison, one of them suffered two strokes. IDOC didn't do anything to help him recover. They have enough money to provide prisoners with medical care and other healthcare. Between the phone call and other basic resources they charge prisoners for, there should be no problems giving them what they need, so it must be a money-making scheme.

My sons were found innocent and were released last year. However, what they experienced over the 20 years they were incarcerated, still impacts them today. I feel for the other MAMAS members whose sons are still incarcerated and in desperate need of better healthcare. Many of their sons are sick due to the conditions IDOC allows in their prisons.

I'm submitting this comment because we have to fight to end the harm IDOC is causing. There are more important issues than prisons that could receive this funding. Like healthcare. If there's enough money to close and reopen Statesville, then there's enough money to invest in resources that promote community well-being.

Esther Hernadez

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My name is Bertha Escamilla and my son is wrongfully convicted. He was in Stateville in the late 90s. The prison was already having issues in 1995. The issues are the same as now. He was complaining about the water to me and to the people in charge. The prison made him buy water and that's what he did. The prison didn't even have enough clean water to sell those in the prison. Over the year he was there he had to drink the water and got sick. Other prisons in Illinois have issues with water too but the issues were not as bad as Statesville. My son wrote countless letters complaining about water and other conditions, too many to keep track of. When he complained he was threatened with being sent back to Statesville. The water conditions had gotten so bad, that there was times when he couldn't even urinate properly. If he could not urinate, he would be punished because the prison took it as he was hiding something that was contraband.

My son is no longer incarcerated but it is my understanding that these issues have not been solved. It is sad that so many people are in Statesville who are wrongfully convicted. People are being forced to drink water that will make them sick and have no process to get the problem solved. I've been involved with MAMAS and many other organizations who are fighting for better conditions through the provided channels. Eventually we decided to buy water and drop it off to Statesville ourselves. Even when we purchased water ourselves, it was not delivered to the people inside. The guards would drink it or just pour it out to torture them. We should not even have to provide the

prison with water. The Prison has money for resources and water. They're not using the money appropriately. The building is falling apart and the same problems are present. I don't understand how we're allowing people to live like this, ignoring these conditions and not even trying to change it.

Just because people are in prison doesn't mean that we can treat them without human dignity. That's torture. It's wrong that they're there to begin with but to also deny them sanitation, proper heat and ac, they see them as animals. IDOC doesn't give a damn. We're tired of seeing our families treated this way and having our tax dollars used this way.

You all have the power to change this and invest money differently.

I'm happy to hear that Logan and Statesville are being closed, they should have closed years ago.

Bertha Escamilla

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My name is Denice Bronis. I'm a member of MAMAS and a mother of an incarcerated person. Statesville and Logan should be closed. People's hard-earned money, aka our tax dollars, should go towards helping institutionalized people. Prioritizing profit over people for hundreds of years has traumatized people and communities.

We're being fed a narrative about prisons to justify spending our money on them and to justify the conditions inside. Society wants us to believe that everyone in prison deserves what happens to them because they're guilty. In reality, most people in prison need support and resources to combat mental illness, substance abuse, or the trauma of living in poverty.

I'm fighting for my son, the innocent people who are wrongfully convicted, and also for the people who have committed horrendous crimes. No one deserves the conditions in Statesville and Logan and they are not making our communities any safer.

Denice Bronis

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

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Rev.. Dwight Stewart

[umc80@hotmail.com](mailto:umc80@hotmail.com)

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May 31, 2024

My name is Tamara Kirby. I am an employee of Logan Correctional Center. I strongly oppose the relocation of Logan Correctional Center from Lincoln/ Logan County to Crest Hill. I began working at Logan Correctional Center in 2016 as a contract employee until 2020 when I became a state employee and began working towards my pension. My husband is retired and on a fixed income. My job is crucial to our lives and our future. The idea has been tossed about that all employees would not lose their jobs but instead would be offered positions at another facility possibly 90 miles away. It is not feasible in these economic times for myself and many other employees to essentially reduce our pay by adding increased burdens. My salary does not allow for this added expense. This additional time away from our families would make it impossible to attend local school events and shop local businesses. This negative impact would reach far beyond the 500 employees.

There is little or no argument of the need for rebuilding Logan Correctional Center. My coworkers and myself have all worked in heat with no air (extra water and popsicles were handed out!), cold with no heat (wearing coats and gloves!), and toilet water flooded hallways and offices while we scrambled to keep everything off the floor and then worked to disinfect and sanitize everything affected. All this was through no fault of our own negligence but due instead

to budget shortages. Our officers were thrown into situations of on the job training with mental health crises'; the unique challenges of working with the female population followed by the unique challenges of working with gender identities. It is unfair to reward the essential crew with job losses and hardship for no reason. There are 150-200 acres of land that is ample to build a new facility on. The land and grounds are filled with beautiful flowers and landscaping. The expansive area allows for the dog program on grounds as well. It would make great sense to walk the individuals to new housing on grounds as opposed to the chaos of unnecessary relocation of the individuals. 66% of whom are from the central and southern part of IL and many of whom have written opposing the move. The distance to travel may prevent many families from coming and being able to visit their mom, their sister, wife, and loved one. The central location would be financially responsible due to the costs of transporting individuals for transfer, court writs, hospital writs. The loss of the prison would be devastating to Logan County. Less people in the county would mean less tax assistance. Although people should not rely on prisons but instead rely on public sector jobs it would not be growth for Logan County but instead a loss. It would however, be growth for Will County who already has Stateville Prison. The impact of the loss after the closing of Lincoln College and Lincoln Christian University would forever be felt. These are losses that have not and will not be coming back.

Logan Correctional Center should be rebuilt on the grounds where it is currently located.

Tamara Kirby

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My name is Victoria Gutmann. I am the visiting coordinator at Logan Correctional Center. I moved to Logan County, Illinois 9 years ago and started my career as an officer at Logan Correctional Center 8 years ago. I started as an officer during a very pivotal time for IDOC and incarcerated women in Illinois. Logan CC was experiencing multiple staff assaults a week, TACT activations almost daily, and no less than 5 suicide watches at all times. Due to the Rasho lawsuit that affected all of IDOC, Logan and it's staff went through major changes on how to deal with the individuals' mental health and the services provided. It was a major learning curve. There were many wrongs but together we all grew and learned and I believe that we really have the best staff dealing with these individuals. The individuals that we house should not have to go through that learning curve again with the entirely new staff you would have to hire and train if Logan was relocated outside of Logan County.

As I said above I am the visiting coordinator. I believe the numbers are something around 60% or more are from central and southern Illinois. Many low income families are able to visit their loved ones, aiding in individuals' rehabilitation thanks to being in a centralized location. It can also be difficult for the many DCFS cases we have to make it to Will County as frequently as needed without further disrupting the children's lives by having to take them out of school early and travel longer distances to bond with their mothers. I know you might ask well what about the other 40% that want to see their families. Fortunately for northern Illinois there are train and bus services that can bring them to Logan county for a small fee comparable to the cost of gas in a car.

On a more personal level, when I started at Logan my plan was temporary and I was going to move back to Missouri. But I fell in love with the area and the job. I got married. I bought a



house in Logan County. My in-laws are in Logan County while the rest of my family is Missouri. I have 2 children now. My almost 5 year old has attended Carrol Catholic School for the past 2 years and will begin kindergarten there next fall. She loves her school. My 2 year old son has started at Park Meadows for day care. In case the powers that be aren't aware, child care is beyond difficult to find. Most wait lists are 2 years long. We attend church, in Logan County. Our lives are established in Logan County.

My husband began his career at Logan correctional Center 5 years ago and recently got promoted to sergeant. Not only would this move dislocate myself and my husband, both providers for our family, but it would dislocate many other young families like ours and ultimately create a chain reaction when allowing non security to displace less- senior employees at other facilities.

I'm 35 years old and like where I'm at in life. I like my job. I like my location. I like my work family. Please consider the many lives both staff and individuals in custody and Logan County as a whole that this move would hurt.

Victoria Gutmann

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Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

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Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

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Anjal Chande

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Jenell Green

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As Maya Schenwar (2014) writes in her book *Locked Down, Locked Out: Why Prison Doesn't Work and How We Can Do Better*, "The word 'incarcerate' stems from the same root as the word 'cancel': Both mean to cross something, or someone, out (whether with bars, or lines, or actions)" (p. 119). I remember a student in a class I taught at Stateville reading that line aloud

in our class and saying, "I don't want to be canceled." Illinois has an incredible opportunity now to do better, for everyone throughout our state who is impacted by incarceration. We have an opportunity to invest in communities and to refuse an economy where the financial stability of some relies upon the caging of others.

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Chez Rumpf

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Hope Barnes

[hope.barnes3@gmail.com](mailto:hope.barnes3@gmail.com)

1607 W Ainslie St Apt 3

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Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

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Julia Cary

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Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships. Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

Given the inhumane conditions in Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at this facility. We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety.

Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.



At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Kenji Granberry

[granberry@protonmail.com](mailto:granberry@protonmail.com)

6552 S. Evans Ave.

Chicago, 60637

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Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I write as a proponent of closure for Logan Correctional Center, filing a written statement.

For the following reasons, Logan CC must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

The funding and expenditures of our statewide prison system affect economic opportunities for all Illinois residents. As discussed in greater detail below, prisons take government funding away from programs and resources that create economic opportunities and financial stability in communities across the state. Incarceration also disrupts economic development by destabilizing families, creating barriers to employment, and lowering future earnings. These effects on currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families ripple out through

our communities. As an Illinois resident, decisions about investments in prisons affect me and my economic future.

Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions. IDOC states that there will be approximately 850 jobs within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Deterred by a community's reputation as a "prison town," more successful industries may look elsewhere.

Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at Logan. For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. At the state level, IDOC has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled.

Prison jobs also harm workers' health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy. With elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers, they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

Logan County residents deserve better economic opportunities than prisons in their communities. With proper support, this region can build more robust and desirable economic

systems in the wake of prison closure--ones that will attract residents and keep workers healthy.

Conditions at Logan are “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population.”

A 2023 study commissioned by IDOC found that Logan Correctional Center is “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population” and must be closed permanently. According to IDOC, Logan has “crumbling infrastructure,” with housing units infested with mold and a failing sewer system. Basic human needs - including access to safe water, clean conditions, and heat in the winter - cannot be met by Logan, even with renovations. The facility is riddled with cockroaches and pest feces; the water is brown and previously tested positive for legionella bacteria; and the “aging” heating systems make the temperature at the facility freezing cold in the winter. There is asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, as well as potential contamination in the soil and groundwater from gallons of spilled gasoline, an active gun range, and toxic burning and dumping - violations found by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Built decades prior, Logan is not and cannot be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed. These conditions pose daily threats to the health and safety of both staff and people incarcerated at Logan.

Prisons are inherently traumatizing, especially for incarcerated women. Prison environments inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people. Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of evidence shows that prison causes high rates of PTSD among incarcerated people. Rates of suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities.

Closing Logan is a step towards shutting down all maximum security facilities in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We look forward to the upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River.

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority of people incarcerated in these facilities have survived gender-based violence, such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence (for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child). A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships. Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors. Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children. These limitations mirror common tactics abusive partners use to isolate survivors and limit their power and control. These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence. It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health. Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need.

By closing Logan, Illinois is starting the process of ridding taxpayers of the burden of decaying facilities that we no longer need. While shutting two prisons is a good start, we need to look at closing at least 8 additional facilities in the immediate future, as there are an excess of over 15,000 prison beds in IDOC's existing capacity. When the capacity for prisons far exceeds the population, Logan Correctional Center needs to be shuttered for good and not reopened or rebuilt.

Illinois can release incarcerated people from Logan now, without waiting until transfers start happening.

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Closing Logan will be a long and disruptive process - the state should begin to release people out to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Any funds proposed to rebuild Logan would be better invested in communities. Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation. Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

Rebuilding Logan would be a prime example of government inefficiency

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are roughly 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC's capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people's mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Logans' unsuitable infrastructure, by depopulating the facility and expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

It is with these considerations in mind that I firmly stand for closing Logan Correctional Center and not rebuilding it.

Zoryana Smozhanyk

[zhsmozhanyk@gmail.com](mailto:zhsmozhanyk@gmail.com)

2709 N 74th Ct

Elmwood Park , Illinois 60707

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The degrading inhumanity with which we treat people who are incarcerated in this state is unconscionable. I am sickened that we have set up a society where people's livelihoods - or political aspirations - hinge on the caging of other people's bodies. We can and must do better.

While I hold onto hope that we in Illinois have the potential to move toward a more humane system (perhaps one that doesn't rest on balancing the cosmic scales of justice by meeting harm with harm, but one that is concerned with the tangible well-being and restoration of those who have been harmed) I am thoroughly discouraged by the idea of building any new carceral facilities. A new prison indicates an intention for this state to continue incarcerating us and our children for generations to come.

I beg serious consideration for the \$900 million allocated for IDOC capital development to be spent lifting our state's remaining carceral facilities to meet basic living standards. Please do not plan to put my children in prison. Please have compassion on those who are in custody now. Spending hundreds of millions of dollars on a new facility while people currently in the state's custody suffer with undrinkable water, collapsing ceilings, rodent-infested kitchens and worse is a disregard for the wellbeing of people in Illinois' custody which is unfortunately both typical and horrifying.

Close the prison. Do not build a new one.

Katrina Baugh

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My name is Michael Gutmann and am married with 4 children, my wife Victoria Gutmann also works at Logan CC. We live in Logan County and both of our kids go to school in Logan County. Closing down Logan Correctional Center would not only be devastating to the county economically but also to the families who work at the facility to have to displace away from the homes, lives, and family and friends they have to try to start a new life in a new area. The families that work at the facility already have their kid's school and childcare set up and would have to try to find new homes, schools, childcare in another area if forced to displace. It would be economically devastating to the IDOC as well moving the facility anywhere but the middle of the state for the court writs that have to go to southern Illinois. Keeping Logan in Logan county makes sense Economically and Geographically for the families who work there, the Individuals in Custody and their families who visit them, and for IDOC as a whole as is it centralized for all Individuals in Custody throughout the state.

Michael S. Gutmann

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Committee on Government Forecasting and Accountability:

Impact for Equity is a public interest law and policy center which strives to combat systemic barriers to equity and to fight for racial, economic, and social justice. We aim to address these systemic injustices by working for equity, liberation, and safety across interconnected systems in Chicago and Illinois. Through partnerships, research, policy design, advocacy, and litigation, we seek to dismantle systemic barriers and create equitable opportunities for all residents to thrive in safe communities.

We strongly believe that the Logan Correctional Center should be closed and that it should be closed as soon as possible.

**I. Logan is Not a Suitable Place to Live or Work:**

IDOC's current plan to continue incarcerating women and having staff continue to work in an unsafe and infested building for years is unconscionable.

The plan states that if "the conditions of Logan continue to deteriorate, or a part of its critical infrastructure fails" they may consider relocating people. However, conditions at Logan have already surpassed deterioration. According to the 2023 CGL report, Logan is "ineffective, and unsuitable for any population." The coal-powered facility first opened in the 1870s has crumbling infrastructure, mold, failing systems (e.g. heating and cooling failures), and cannot meet basic human needs even with renovations. Additional issues include asbestos, lead paint, and environmental contamination, posing daily threats to health and safety. The plan to keep people locked in the building until a new center is opened is not realistic or humane. Keeping people in the decrepit facility will only deepen the physical and mental health issues that the environment is currently causing for people incarcerated there as well as staff.

By intentionally exploring opportunities for early release, such as clemency, combined with the existing space in IDOC facilities, we are able to move away from the practice of mass incarceration. IDOC must update their strategy by depopulating Logan, expediting releases, and utilizing existing facilities.

**II. Opportunity to Think Bigger Picture**

IDOC's plans should be part of a much larger shift to decrease the size of the carceral system in Illinois. Our society needs to undo the components of mass incarceration; large, steel facilities where people are sent away and kept from society. As IDOC describes, we must strive for a smaller, regional system, which prioritizes keeping people physically close to their communities and support systems, while supporting them for release.



In order to move forward at all, IDOC must engage in meaningful engagement with people who are directly impacted—both staff and those incarcerated. Intermittent listening sessions that do not provide direct answers, clarity, or transparency into the decision-making process are not sufficient.

Finally, as part of the larger picture, Illinois should follow the lead of organizations working to expand mechanisms for release. As the carceral footprint decreases, Illinois can invest in community-based services instead of prison rebuilds.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andrea Dantus

Staff Counsel, Impact for Equity

25 E. Washington Street Suite 1515 Chicago, Illinois 60602 | Tel. 312.641.5570 | [www.impactforequity.org](http://www.impactforequity.org)

June 1, 2024

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
ATTN: Facility Closure  
802 Stratton Building  
Springfield, IL 62706

Re: Written Statement Filed (Proponent) for Recommendation to close Logan Correctional Center

To the Commission,

We, the undersigned organizations, write in support of the Illinois Department of Corrections' (IDOC) Recommendation to close Logan Correctional Center ("Logan"). For the following reasons, this facility must be closed permanently, demolished, and never rebuilt.

**1. Closing Logan will not significantly harm local employment or other economic conditions.**

IDOC's recommendation to close [Logan](#) mitigates potential negative economic impact on nearby communities by facilitating staff transfers to nearby vacancies. The agency states that there will be approximately 850 within a 90-mile radius of Logan when the facility closes. For every single current employee Logan, there is at least one nearby position available. IDOC's plan will allow current staff to continue working for the agency if they desire to do so.

The potential negative downstream impact of closing Logan will also be small. IDOC's economic impact study found that the prison indirectly generates 48 jobs in [Logan](#) County. This represents a loss of only ~0.4% of total employment. Prison closure will have negligible effects on other sectors.

Evidence from across the country confirms that prisons do not reduce unemployment or significantly improve local economic conditions:

- A 2023 [examination of 81 counties across 19 states from 2001-2020](#) found that prison closures had no significant effect on unemployment, GDP, or per capita personal income.
- A 2023 [study by the Kentucky Center for Economic Policy](#) examined three rural counties before and after the opening of a federal prison in 1992, 2003 and 2004, respectively. The researchers concluded: "...rather than economic improvement, longstanding problems have continued or even worsened two to three decades after the federal prisons opened. Total employment has continued to fall, poverty remains among the highest in the country and median household incomes have remained low."

- Authors of a 2010 [study of county-level employment data from 1974-2006](#) concluded that their “research into employment growth suggests that prisons are doing more harm than good among vulnerable counties.”
- A 2005 [comparison of county-level economic data](#) found that neither established nor newly built prisons contributed to employment in non-metropolitan areas.
- A 2004 [analysis of 1990-2000 US census data](#) determined that “new state prison towns experienced less growth than non-prison towns” while suffering greater increases in unemployment and poverty.
- A 2003 [report by the Sentencing Project](#) reviewed 25 years of county-level data on per capita income and unemployment in rural New York and found “no significant difference or discernible pattern of economic trends between the seven rural counties in New York that hosted a prison and the seven rural counties that did not host a prison.”

Prisons often drain local resources by burdening local government and crowding out other economic sectors. These facilities strain transportation, water, sewer, and electric infrastructure, but provide no property tax revenue to the local governments that shoulder the costs of maintaining these critical systems. Beyond the direct effect of prison employment, prisons have [relatively little downstream economic impact](#) to make up for lost local tax revenue. Deterred by a community’s reputation as a “prison town,” industries with a greater spillover effect may look elsewhere. Potential new residents may do the same.

## **2. Jobs in carceral facilities are undesirable and unsafe for workers.**

From correctional officer positions to non-security professional roles, prison jobs are undesirable and many positions remain vacant. More than one in three authorized jobs are currently vacant at [Logan](#). For entry-level correctional officer positions, 171 of 432 (40%) at Logan remain unfilled. This facility also lacks staff for almost one in four non-security positions.

Logan is not unique--prisons across the state and the nation struggle to attract a sufficient workforce. In its recommendations for closure, IDOC identifies hundreds of additional job openings within a commuting radius of [each facility](#). The agency has a 28% overall vacancy rate with 32% (3,513) security jobs unfilled. USP Thomson, a federal prison in Illinois, has [the most open positions of any federal correctional facility](#) in the country. Overall, [the Federal Bureau of Prisons is 40% understaffed](#). In other states, increased pay, hiring and retention bonuses, reduced hiring requirements, and social media campaigns are all [failing to attract and retain correctional workers](#).

Prison jobs also harm workers’ health and wellbeing. The same poor conditions experienced by incarcerated people impact anyone who spends time in the facility. In addition to physical health concerns, prison environments are harmful for the mental health of staff and incarcerated people alike. Prison staff [experience higher rates of depression, PTSD, and suicide and shorter life expectancy](#). With [elevated rates of domestic violence among correctional officers](#), they are also more likely to impart this trauma on their families and communities.

### **3. The conditions in Logan Correctional Center are “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population.”**

Logan Correctional Center must be shuttered permanently. As stated by the [State's Facilities Master Plan](#) conducted by CGL, Logan is “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population.” IDOC concurs with this finding, stating “The Department has deemed Logan necessary to close due to its crumbling infrastructure, outdated design, and significant need for capital investment.” Problems cited by CGL included inhumane building conditions, noncompliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), insufficient temperature controls, and environmental hazards.

The crippling infrastructure at Logan harms the safety of people incarcerated and working at the facility. As identified in the [John Howard Association \(JHA\) 2023 independent prison monitoring evaluation](#) of Logan Correctional Facility, “the serious infrastructure issues at Logan create unsafe and extremely difficult living conditions,” and these “infrastructure issues compromise the safety and wellbeing of everyone who lives and works inside many of Illinois’ prisons.”

The CGL report’s Operational Assessment of Logan Correctional Center found that Logan “does not meet” necessary requirements to uphold the human rights of people held at this facility. The Building Conditions Index (BCI) additionally found that 29% of Logan’s buildings were inoperable, its housing units were in “impaired operation condition,” and Logan had the second highest BCI score of any IDOC facility. The report identified that Logan has “aging coal-fired power system, molding housing units,” “significant deterioration of the infrastructure,” and a failing sewer system. As per the CGL team, “most aspects of the facility are severely deficient” and there is an “overwhelming amount of physical maintenance needs at the facility.” As such, Logan cannot be repaired and must be closed.

Logan is not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and cannot be brought into compliance without significant costs. According to the CGL report, almost 1,000 of Logan’s housing unit beds were built nearly a century ago, before the passage of the ADA. John Howard Association’s monitoring report found a troubling lack of ADA accommodations available for people with disabilities at the facility, and building these accommodations would be extremely costly when deferred maintenance for Logan is already \$116 million and active capital projects exceed \$26 million. This is of particular concern as the population at Logan becomes increasingly aged and infirmed.

Logan is unable to provide sufficient temperature control for all seasons. In the John Howard Association 2023 [independent prison monitoring evaluation of Logan Correctional Facility](#), staff and people incarcerated reported lack of heat, without additional blankets and clothes and those fortunate enough to have boots sleeping in them. One staff member commented “winter is here and it’s cold. We lose heat all the time. It isn’t fair for us or the individuals we serve.” Another staff member commented “We aren’t providing basic things that we should be. No heat in the kitchen in December?! How am I to teach these people to value themselves and others when the department won’t even provide basic human rights to them?”

The environmental hazards at Logan Correctional Facility harms the health of people incarcerated at the facility. In the John Howard Association (JHA) 2023 independent prison monitoring evaluation of Logan Correctional Facility, the water at Logan was unsafe - brown, discolored, and [positive for legionella](#). In food preparation areas, there were reports of mold, roaches, birds, and bird droppings. A staff member commented “these buildings are infested with mold, falling apart, toilets, showers, water issues DAILY.”

IDOC’s own [environmental impact report](#) regarding the proposed closure of Logan also identified significant environmental hazards. The report found asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint in all of Logan’s buildings, both of which present significant threats to the health of people incarcerated and staff. Further, the report found potential contamination in the soil and groundwater at Logan, including from coal ash and piles; “burn pits;” a spill by an employee of 100 gallons of gasoline; a “metal bull pen;” dumping of electronic waste; and an active gun range leaving lead bullets. IDOC has been [found in violation](#) of numerous environmental protections, including by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

#### **4. IDOC’s failure to provide adequate healthcare heightens concerns about conditions in Logan.**

Since 2010, the State of Illinois and IDOC have been embroiled in costly and burdensome litigation for [failing to provide adequate medical care](#) to people in IDOC custody. As identified in the ongoing case [Lippert v. Jeffreys](#), because “the State’s prison healthcare is grossly underfunded, badly managed, and deeply dysfunctional, resulting in needless, painful delays in treatment, mismanagement of common chronic conditions, and preventable deaths,” in 2019 the State agreed to a [consent decree](#) that requires a court-approved monitor to oversee the complete overhaul of medical care in IDOC. Despite this consent decree, [IDOC has continued to fail to provide suitable medical care](#), and the court held IDOC in [contempt](#) in 2022 for this failure. As cited by JHA in their monitoring report of [Logan](#), “medical care inside of IDOC continues to be an intractable issue, fueling pain and suffering for people who are incarcerated. Ongoing litigation has further brought to light lack of care, inadequate quality of care, lack of standards, and lack of oversight of the outside vendor providing medical care in Illinois’ prisons.” The need for closure is all the more pressing given the [risk to life of IDOC’s inadequate medical care](#) - particularly as the population at Logan becomes increasingly elderly and infirm - and the extreme costs to the state resulting from this failure.

#### **5. Prisons inherently traumatize incarcerated people--there is no such thing as a trauma informed prison.**

Prison environments [inherently damage the mental health of incarcerated people](#). Isolation from support systems, loss of autonomy, unpredictability, and exposure to violence—conditions shown to worsen mental health—are all fundamental features of the carceral system. A growing body of

evidence shows that [prison causes high rates of PTSD](#) among incarcerated people. Rates of [suicide and self-harm are elevated in carceral facilities](#).

The traumatic impact of maximum security prisons like Logan are particularly severe. The treatment that people receive inside these facilities amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. As we formally acknowledged when we closed Tamms SuperMax, we can now acknowledge that also the treatment of people in maximum security facilities is unacceptable in a civilized society. We eagerly anticipate upcoming proposals to shut down Pontiac, Lawrence, Menard, and the maximum security portion of Illinois River Correctional Center.

## **6. Prisons are particularly traumatic for incarcerated women, many of whom are survivors of gender-based violence.**

Any discussion of women's correctional facilities must consider the reality that the vast majority - 90% - of people incarcerated in these facilities have [survived gender-based violence](#), such as domestic violence and sexual assault, prior to their incarceration. Furthermore, many of these survivors have been criminalized and incarcerated for actions they took to survive this violence or for circumstances directly related to this violence, for example, charges brought under a theory of accountability, and failure to protect cases when a mother's abusive partner harms a child (see [Goodmark 2023](#)).

A growing body of social science research documents how the routine policies, practices, and conditions in women's prisons mirror the power and control dynamics that characterize domestic violence relationships (see [Davis and Shaylor 2001](#); [Goodmark 2023](#); [Rumpf 2023](#)). Incarcerated survivors lack autonomy over their own bodies. The use and threat of strip searches, for example, is a re-traumatizing experience for sexual assault survivors (see [Davis 2003](#)). Incarcerated survivors also deal with severely constrained autonomy regarding making decisions about their lives, how they spend their time, whether they have contact with loved ones, and their ability to care for their children.

These findings have prompted many researchers to conclude that incarceration itself is a type of gender-based violence (see [Davis et al. 2022](#); [Goodmark 2023](#); [Richie 2012](#); [Rumpf 2023](#)). It imposes the trauma of separation on the children of women in custody as well, who suffer lifelong harm to their physical and mental health (see [Sharma, Rising, and McNeely 2023](#); [Uggen and McElrath 2014](#)). Illinois has an opportunity to advance its efforts to protect and support survivors by ending its reliance on incarceration, in part through closing Logan Correctional Center for good, not rebuilding it, and investing in the social and structural supports that have been shown to actually keep survivors and their families safe, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, counseling, and financial support.

## **7. The current capacity in IDOC facilities far exceeds the need; this excess will increase as the number of people incarcerated in Illinois continues to decline.**

Logan needs to be permanently closed and not reopened, as the current capacity of IDOC exceeds the number of people currently incarcerated in the system, as well as realistic projections for the number of people who will be incarcerated in the system in the future.

Regarding Logan, the CGL report found that “females also will have excess capacity in the system,” and “the issue for the female population is not the quantity of beds, but the quality of beds and facilities, especially as it relates to Logan Correctional Center.”

According to all of IDOC’s most recent and publicly available reports, Illinois’ carceral system is oversized by 50%.

Exempting Reception Centers, *IDOC has 15,492 more beds in IDOC than they are using today.*

The IDOC reports its total capacity to incarcerate at 47,119 bodies.

Unused Space broken down by facility type is as follows:

- MAXIMUM: 2,992 excess beds
- MEDIUM: 7,133 excess beds
- MINIMUM: 2,770 excess beds
- WOMEN: 707 excess beds
- ADULT TRANSITION CENTERS: 305 unused beds
- LIFE SKILLS RE-ENTRY: 564 unused beds
- WORK CAMPS: 651 unused beds
- TREATMENT CENTERS: 370 unused beds

**8. People currently incarcerated at Logan should be prioritized for release to their family and community.**

Given the inhumane conditions detailed throughout CGL Companies’ report, as well as IDOC’s reference of these conditions as justification to close and rebuild Logan Correctional Center, Illinois should use all available mechanisms to expedite the release of as many people as possible who are currently incarcerated at these facilities.

In its recommendation to close Logan, IDOC asserts that this plan aligns with its efforts to create a “regionalized approach for the women’s facilities.” IDOC notes, “This approach would enhance individuals’ access to geographically sensible programmatic services through community and volunteer providers, trauma-informed care, the promotion of social connectedness, and greater opportunities to build family ties through family reunification efforts affording mothers the ability to be in closer proximity to their children. The Department seeks to create a family reunification area for mothers and their children to develop/grow those family bonds that are so vital.” These are admirable goals, but they are not achievable through incarceration. Mother-child visits are important but they can only mitigate, not prevent, the profound damage of the mother’s absence from the household (see [Aiello and McCorkel 2018](#)). If IDOC is committed to “social connectedness,” “build[ing] family ties,” and “affording mothers the ability to be in closer



proximity to their children,” then the Department should make every effort to keep caregivers in their communities, and the state should invest in community-based resources that support these goals.

We urge Governor Pritzker to use his executive power to approve the clemency petitions that currently await his review, particularly the cases of incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence whose incarceration stems from their experiences of interpersonal violence. The Governor should commute the sentences of all people who have served more than ten years of a long sentence; research demonstrates that longer sentences do not result in increased public safety, and indeed can reduce safety. A 2022 [report](#) from the Council on Criminal Justice Task Force on Long Sentences found that “long sentences have either no effect on recidivism or slightly increase recidivism when compared to shorter sentences.” Illinois should prioritize releasing people incarcerated in Logan and Stateville to their families and communities as soon as possible, and use the funds that would have been allocated for construction for community-based services and housing.

Survivors of crime also want investments in alternatives to incarceration. [The Prison Policy Initiative points to studies](#) showing that survivors of crime prefer holding people accountable through non-carceral options like restorative justice, community service, and mental health and substance use treatment. The same studies show that this group prefers investments in mental health treatment over investments in prisons or jails. They also supported releasing incarcerated people who participated in rehabilitative programming or could serve their sentences through diversion, community service, or treatment programs.

#### **9. The proposal to rebuild Logan after it is demolished is an inefficient use of taxpayer funds.**

It is shortsighted to allocate nearly a billion dollars to a project that lacks details and input from community experts. To determine details of this plan including exact rebuild costs, new facility locations, and construction timelines, significant input from the Capital Development Board is necessary and has yet to be solicited.

At this time, there are over 15,000 vacant beds in IDOC. It is an inefficient use of resources to allocate funds to expanding IDOC’s capacity when its current capacity is used inefficiently and often with arbitrary cruelty that destroys people’s mental health. Illinois must consider more cost-effective means to address Stateville and Logans’ unsuitable infrastructure, such as depopulating both facilities by expediting releases and offering clemency and mass commutations where appropriate, and utilizing existing facilities.

#### **10. Funds consumed by constructing and operating prisons would be better spent on community programs and resources that prevent crime.**

The IDOC reports the average cost of incarcerating a single person for a single year at \$46,743. The University of Illinois reports the cost of housing, feeding, equipping and educating a single

Illinois resident for a single year to fall between \$35,862 and \$41,126. While higher education consistently leads to outcomes we desire, such as higher economic productivity and lower crime rates, we choose to invest \$5,000 - \$10,000 more in certain individuals annually in order to inflict punishment on them using a system whose outcomes are decidedly harmful; trauma, broken families, and life-long challenges to accessing housing and employment to name a few.

Additionally, the cost of incarcerating someone in the IDOC has more than doubled in the last decade, from [\\$21,260 in 2013](#) to [\\$46,743 in 2023](#), and unfortunately this is not because of significant increases being invested in the rehabilitation, health care, or well-being of incarcerated individuals. Much of this money is contributed to static costs of maintaining crumbling infrastructure, despite the fact that we no longer need  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the current operational capacity. Even if these facilities weren't hazardous to the people living and working in them, it would make financial sense to shutter them permanently.

[Given the context of our shrinking prison population](#), the plan to build a new prison is nonsensical. The IDOC incarcerated population peaked on February 9, 2023 with 49,401 people in custody, and is at 29,109 people as of March 31, 2024. Given recent legal changes, we expect the population to continue shrinking. With our aging and infirmed prison population, more people are applying for and being granted release under the [Joe Coleman Medical Release Act](#). With [recent policy changes which increase awards of sentencing credits](#), many people are set to spend less time in prison than was calculated by CGL when they estimated modest increases in the IDOC population in their May 2023 report. Through combinations of other law changes and judicial decisions, there are also [people in IDOC who are now beginning to become eligible for parole](#) consideration. We also continue to [lead the world in rates of wrongful convictions](#). As more evidence surfaces about [the torturous tactics of Reynaldo Guevara, Jon Burge and Ronald Watts, releases and exonerations continue](#) amongst people serving long sentences in IDOC. These are just a few of the many factors at play which are increasing rates of release amongst currently incarcerated individuals.

While more releases are happening at the back end of the system, Illinois is also moving toward lower intake rates at the front end. Changes to Illinois law introduced in the SAFE-T Act have already [meaningfully decreased the incarcerated population at county jails around the state](#). As the benefits of participatory defense, family stabilization and less coercion toward guilty pleas ripple throughout the state, we expect this to result in lower rates of commitment to IDOC in the first place. As evidence of these expected trends already playing out, [from March of 2023 to March of 2024, IDOC's prison population shrank by 1.88%](#).

Throughout its proposals to close and rebuild Logan Correctional Center, IDOC stresses its rehabilitative focus and argues the new facilities will help achieve this goal. A wealth of research, however, documents the disruption and harm incarceration causes regardless of the conditions of confinement. Removing people from their families and communities hurts individuals, children, families, and communities and weakens the social bonds that facilitate rehabilitation (see [Schenwar 2014](#)). Illinois has a real opportunity to truly focus on rehabilitation by investing in interventions that keep people in their communities, address the root causes of

harm, and strengthen families and communities. Rather than spend a proposed \$1 billion rebuilding prisons that by their nature will center the correctional goals of incapacitation and retribution, Illinois should invest those funds into community-based healthcare, housing, education, and vocational supports. A true focus on rehabilitation and transformation requires more than improving the physical conditions of confinement.

In its proposals to close and rebuild Logan Correctional Center, IDOC explains their “plans to establish an education and vocational village...equipped with technology-enhanced classrooms, libraries, and computer labs, providing individuals in custody with valuable skills in high-demand vocational trades.” Why not invest the proposed \$1 billion this plan will cost into classrooms, libraries, computer labs, and additional community-based supports throughout the state that would benefit everyone living in that community? Why must someone be incarcerated to access these resources? Additionally, IDOC touts Crest Hill’s “proximity to major medical and educational hubs.” Instead of moving incarcerated people closer to healthcare, why not build up the available healthcare resources throughout our state so that all communities have access to these life-sustaining resources?

Incarcerated people at Stateville and Logan agree and have [proposed their own ideas](#) for better ways to spend money allocated for prison reconstruction:

“If the \$900 million was spent on the ‘before,’ we wouldn’t need it for the ‘after.’ A \$450 million prison? I’ve never seen one \$450 million high school. What if we spent it on nine \$100 million community educational resource centers in under-resourced communities?” Michael Bell

“I would use the money toward reentry because many people leaving prison need help, and without security there is recidivism. Money needs to go into transitional housing, recovery homes, mental health facilities, and domestic violence shelters for people upon release. I would work toward making prisons extinct.” Mishunda Davis

“If I had \$900 million, I would invest in mental health services and healthcare resources for marginalized communities.” Chester McKinney

“\$900 million is an unfathomable number to allocate to building sites of depravity, removal, and disharmony. There is no such thing as a humane prison. What an oxymoron — spending \$1 billion to build a prison, but continuing to allow poverty to flourish in communities of color.” Darnell Lane

“The \$900 million should be used to declare poverty a public health crisis. Invest in curing the symptoms of poverty — which are violence, mass incarceration, political, economic and educational inequity — rather than building prisons to disappear marginalized bodies.” Robert Curry

“Instead of spending \$900 million to rebuild two state prisons, our governor could use the principles of equity to address the inequalities that exist in the undercurrent of society. Illinois has environmental and social issues that should take precedence over rebuilding prisons. In some Chicago neighborhoods, there is a 15 to 25 percent unemployment rate, and 1 in 3 young people are high school dropouts. When we have a government that sees human caging as a priority over community building, this is a government that should concern us all.”  
Michael Sullivan

## **Conclusion**

It is for the aforementioned reasons that we write in favor of closing and demolishing Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers and not rebuilding them.

Sincerely,

Moms United Against Violence and  
Incarceration

Darren B Easterling Center for Restorative  
Practices

Liberation Library

The Sentencing Project

Mamas Activating Movements for Abolition  
and Solidarity (MAMAS)

Citizens for Parole

Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry of  
Illinois (UUPMI)

National Lawyers Guild (NLG) Chicago

Parole Illinois

The People's Lobby

Children's Best Interest Project

Cabrini Green Legal Aid

Illinois Prison Project

Coalition to Decarcerate IL

Theatre Y

Chicago Books to Women in Prison

Love & Protect

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**John Howard Association Testimony  
Proposal to Close and Rebuild Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers  
Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
May 10, 2024**

The John Howard Association (JHA) is the only independent, not for profit, not partisan, citizen correctional oversight organization in Illinois. JHA monitors Illinois' prisons by going into them to observe conditions and speak with staff, administrators and people who are incarcerated, and by conducting system wide surveys and receiving information from directly impacted people. JHA's work increases system transparency, identifies issues and puts forward recommendations for reform in order to improve conditions of confinement, treatment inside prisons, outcomes upon release and public safety for our communities.

Governor Pritzker's [announcement](#) on March 15, 2024 to shutter Logan and Stateville in order to rebuild them new recognizes that these prisons are decrepit, unsafe and inhumane. Recognizing that both Logan and Stateville are not fit for human habitation represents an important step towards respecting the dignity and rights of people who are incarcerated and those who work inside. Rethinking our carceral environments in order to move towards smaller, more rehabilitative spaces that will provide people with individualized help and treatment and reduce the suffering and trauma so often experienced in our current prisons is necessary. JHA notes, however, that this plan does not address the fact that the Illinois prisons are currently well under capacity, with close to 12,000 excess prison beds throughout the system, and that there is opportunity to also permanently close some of our worst prisons, to be rid of some of the most appalling living and working conditions people experience in Illinois and provide significant financial savings.

The [Facility Master Plan Report](#) (CGL report), commissioned by the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) authored by an independent consultant, and published in 2023 laid bare the unsuitable, unsafe and inhumane conditions that exist at Logan and Stateville, as well as at many other Illinois prisons. For years JHA had advocated for such realities to be evaluated and made public as we saw and heard of the extreme deprivation and decrepitude people in IDOC faced every day. According to the report, billions of dollars are required to address the ravages of excessive deferred maintenance in IDOC prisons, many of which - including Logan and Stateville - are beyond fixing and can never be made to be appropriate spaces to treat, rehabilitate or house people in custody.

Most of Illinois' prisons were built before the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) became law, making them out of compliance with legal safeguards that should be provided to every person and in violation of the civil rights of people who suffer because of this. This is particularly problematic with the increasingly vulnerable, aged and infirmed population. Wheelchairs and assistive devices cannot be accommodated, establishing sight lines and protections to stop or deter sexual victimization is not possible, and beyond these issues are the horrible conditions people incarcerated in these prisons contend with every day; black mold, poor ventilation, discolored, odorous, and particle filled water in cells and showers, water damage that leads to ceilings and floors collapsing, roofs caving in,

infestations of rodents and vermin, and sewage and sanitation system failures, all of which impact the safety, health and well-being of the people who live and work inside the prisons.

It is long past time that Logan and Stateville be depopulated and demolished. In 2023, women at Logan who responded to a JHA survey commented that *“our water has legionella, our showers, have leeches, our housing units have black mold & asbestos, The housing units are falling in on us”* and that, *“Every day, all day, we breathe BLACK MOLD, ASBESTOS, AND COAL DUST”*. According to the CGL Report, “[o]ur review found the existing Logan Correctional Center to be inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population. The aging coal-fired power system, molding housing units, and facility layout all work in opposition to the mission and goals of the facility. IDOC should find a more suitable location for housing its incarcerated women.” (pg. 7)

Conditions at Stateville are similarly horrible; in assessing this prison as part of the CGL Report, it was found that, “[i]n addition to the extremely poor conditions throughout the facility (peeling paint, leaking roofs) the facility’s 100 year old design is reflective of 1800’s prison philosophy, with multitiered housing units. These units are poor for a maximum custody population, but even worse for a multi-custody re-entry mission. The units lack dayroom space or any adjacent program space. Cells are small and there is limited electrical connections resulting in extension cords ran from cell to cell. Due to limited line-of-sight, an intensive level of staffing is necessary to adequately supervise these units. Maintaining a constant ambient temperature is nearly impossible from the lower tier to the upper tier. Shower facilities are poor and create PREA issues. Overall, the facility can’t comply with ADA requirements” (pg. 46). JHA recently released an [updated facility report](#) on Stateville where we noted that conditions continue to deteriorate, and people continue to report concerns about water quality and the presence of bird feathers and feces in living units, among other unsafe and unhygienic concerns present in this environment. In response to JHA surveys at Stateville in 2023, people incarcerated wrote that *“Stateville should be overhauled or closed. No hot water for the past two months, legionella bacteria in our drinking water supply, also lead was found... infestation of roaches and spiders. I sleep with roaches crawling all in my bed and I keep myself and my cell clean.”* And that *“The drinking water is contaminated; people are developing cancer here at an alarming rate; the air circulation is very poor and we are developing upper respiratory problems from breathing in entirely too much dust/other unknown air pollutants on a daily basis for years on end; Black mold inside cells; very bad roach and mouse infestation”*.

The plans put forth by IDOC and filed with the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accounting (CGFA) for both [Stateville](#) and [Logan](#) acknowledge the current state of disrepair evidenced in each facility, and call for new facilities that comport with correctional practices that recognize the importance of providing people in custody with the tools for change and rehabilitation. This includes improved living conditions, space for programming and treatment, smaller facilities, space for support system visits and reunification, access to community resources, including personnel and program opportunities, and recognizing the need to keep people closer to their communities and loved ones to foster these important relationships.

We cannot continue to pour hundreds of millions of dollars into structures that should not house people in such conditions in the first place. No one would build the structures that make up Stateville, Pontiac, or Menard in the modern era, not for maximum security incarcerated people, not for any human to live or work in. As detailed in the CGL Report, as well as in texts that chart the history of incarceration in the United States, “the multi-tier housing units still in use at these facilities are reflective of the predominate correctional philosophy that existed during their construction [1871-1925] This philosophy centered on isolation where Inmates



would spend their evenings in silence in their cell and work during the day. Little, if any space was needed for programming or out-of-cell time.” (pg. 15) We know that such isolated confinement is harmful to people in itself, without adding the poor physical conditions many also endure. Given our modern understanding of the trauma and damage inflicted by these out of date and cruelly designed structures, we must not continue to invest in them.



**PHOTO # 1 & 2 – View of Catwalk Level Enclosure & Gallery from Ground Floor**

[Photo from p. 253 of IDOC’s COGFA Stateville submission]

While the design of Logan is not as visually arresting, with poor visibility in housing units, ceilings caving in, and rodent feces on ceilings and walls it is hardly less problematic. The CGL report noted that their review, “found the existing Logan Correctional Center to be inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population. The aging coal-fired power system, molding housing units, and facility layout all work in opposition to the mission and goals of the facility.” (pg. 106)

The plans call for both facilities to be rebuilt in Crest Hill, where Stateville is currently located, and approximately 150 miles from where Logan is currently located. Relocating Logan to be closer to Cook County makes sense, given that approximately [34% of women](#) in IDOC custody are from Cook and the surrounding counties. The other women’s prison is located in Decatur, which is in Central Illinois and approximately 36 miles from where Logan is currently located. Having a women’s facility in the Northern part of the State facilitates visitation, family reunification, and the building and maintenance of support systems. The impact studies attached to IDOC’s filed plan with CGFA note that Crest Hill has a growing population, which should positively impact staffing levels at these facilities, while the area surrounding Logan is experiencing population decline. Another important factor in location is the ability to bring programming into the facilities, Crest Hill benefits from its proximity to Chicago and the many

schools nearby; Stateville currently has more post-secondary programs than any other facility in Illinois.

It is critical that stakeholder input is considered as rebuilding plans commence. This includes community members, staff, administrators, people who are formerly and currently incarcerated, advocacy groups, law-makers, and other people impacted by and involved with the criminal justice system. The grim realities of our current prisons should be used to inform future plans in order to avoid mistakes of the past. Where prisons are located, proximity to support systems and community resources, size of the environment, specific features of living and common spaces, including visiting, program and treatment areas, and updated technological infrastructure are some of the important features facilities should have to focus on rehabilitation, provide a safe environment for the people that live and work in them, and respect human dignity.

Another concern around rebuilding these facilities in Crest Hill is that Stateville is adjacent to federally designated and protected wetlands, which are home to at least seven endangered species. Respecting this ecosystem is of utmost importance. At the same time that this natural resource must be protected, plans must also ensure that there is access to clean and safe water for the facilities, and that new, functional sanitation systems are installed. According to the Environmental Impact Study included with IDOC's April 26, 2024 submission to CGFA the State owns approximately 1,000 acres in the area where Stateville is currently situated.<sup>1</sup> This should provide ample space to figure out how to better situate smaller more humane functional prison facilities as needed.

We can reduce our reliance on incarceration and close the most inhumane prisons, while also considering new ways to house people that are safe, rehabilitative, and recognize and respect those who live and work inside our prisons. If the goal of incarceration as stated in the Illinois Constitution is to return people to useful citizenry<sup>2</sup>, facilities should be small, humane, program focused, fully staffed, and located close to community resources and the communities from which people in custody come. Illinois cannot continue to house and employ people in prisons that pose a danger to everyone inside of them due to degraded and hazardous conditions, the costs are too high when measured in dollars, morality and our humanity.

In addition to infrastructure problems and the high cost of addressing them, the staffing crisis plaguing IDOC, and the rest of the United States, is another reason it is time to repurpose, consolidate, and close prisons.<sup>3</sup> In COGFA filings, IDOC reported nearly a third of their positions vacant. A situation that is even worse at many prisons, and even more dire for prison healthcare providers. It is difficult to reduce the number of staff needed without reducing facility size or number.<sup>4</sup> As it stands, people in IDOC spend the vast majority of their time in their cells in lockdown conditions, exacerbating all issues facilities face and making life worse for both the people who are incarcerated and work in them. Not only does the staffing deficit impact quality of life, it costs the State several million dollars every month in overtime expenses.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> April 26, 2024, submission to CGFA by IDOC, Attachment C, Environmental Impact Study, pg. 296, <https://cgfa.ilga.gov/upload/Stateville%20Recommendation%20Combined%20for%20Web.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Illinois State Constitution, Section 11, [https://www.ilga.gov/commission/lrb/con1.htm#:~:text=the%20same%20offense,-\(Source%3A%20Illinois%20Constitution.\),blood%20or%20forfeiture%20of%20estate](https://www.ilga.gov/commission/lrb/con1.htm#:~:text=the%20same%20offense,-(Source%3A%20Illinois%20Constitution.),blood%20or%20forfeiture%20of%20estate).

<sup>3</sup> Gabriel Petek, *The 2023-24 Budget: The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation*, (Feb. 2023) <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2023/4686/CDJR-Budget-021623.pdf> (analyzing California prisons: “most staffing costs... are only saved when capacity is reduced”).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Illinois Department of Corrections testimony, Illinois Senate Public Safety Appropriations Hearing, April 16, 2024



As IDOC has struggled to staff all prisons it has not had the ability to concentrate resources and focus on a vision for the future given lack of visibility and attention, political and administrative turnover, the COVID-19 pandemic, and dealing with crisis after crisis not just within the population but in relation to emergency facility repairs, contractual issues, and the burnout such situations induce. Evidence and experience demonstrate that facilities such as Kewanee that are smaller and purpose driven do better in a variety of ways, including retaining staff, reducing burnout and overall outcomes.

Massive investments are needed to repair IDOC infrastructure problems, facility consolidation, repurposing and closures mitigate the costs associated with addressing the enormous infrastructure needs of the system. Total deferred maintenance for IDOC currently sits at over \$2.6 billion, nearly a third of all deferred maintenance for State facilities.<sup>6</sup> Infrastructure costs will only increase absent closures. The amount of deferred maintenance in IDOC has increased each of the last four Fiscal Years, and IDOC has led state agencies in deferred maintenance each of those years.<sup>7</sup> There are also ongoing class-action lawsuits concerning infrastructure problems at Stateville<sup>8</sup> and the Stateville Northern Reception Center.<sup>9</sup>

To mitigate these truly enormous capital costs, and improve conditions and safety for people who are incarcerated and corrections staff throughout IDOC, Illinois must reevaluate not only our use of facilities but our policies governing sentencing, early/earned release, medical clemency, housing for aging individuals in state custody which increases the costs of incarceration due to needed care<sup>10</sup>, as well as the other laws and tactics that have fueled mass incarceration and led us to our current untenable situation.

Respectfully Submitted,



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John Howard Association of Illinois  
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Chicago, IL 60601  
[jvollen@thejha.org](mailto:jvollen@thejha.org), (331)264-4081

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<sup>6</sup> See *Illinois State Capital Budget*, Fiscal Year 2024  
<https://budget.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/budget/documents/budget-book/fy2024-budget-book/Fiscal-Year-2024-Capital-Budget.pdf>, pg 36.

<sup>7</sup> See *Illinois State Capital Budget*, Fiscal Year 2024, p. 37  
<https://budget.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/budget/documents/budget-book/fy2024-budget-book/Fiscal-Year-2024-Capital-Budget.pdf>, .

<sup>8</sup> See *Dobbey v. Weilding*, <https://clearinghouse.net/case/17473/>

<sup>9</sup> See *Shipp v. Gomez*, <https://www.uplcchicago.org/what-we-do/prison/shipp-v-gomez.html>

<sup>10</sup> It costs over twice as much to house an elderly prisoner in comparison to younger prisoners according to the National Institute of Justice (See *Addressing the Needs of Elderly, Chronically Ill, and Terminally Ill Inmates*, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/static.nicic.gov/Library/018735.pdf>).

5-13-24  
Hello my name Irenia ANN COTNER  
B80749 I been in IDOC Since  
12/21/06 I been detain Since 8-30-05  
Under The Accountability Law Since  
being in prison I have went to  
School, been in A lot and many  
programs, and I have Always had  
Work assignments Since Dwight CC,  
I been to Wells Treatment in Dwight  
CC, In Logan CC. Work assignments,  
School, A.B.E. Trying to Raise Take  
Score, because I am payed ReStict  
On State pay. Dued to My hearing  
Dis-able, I havenot been able to  
pass the Take Test. Just took it  
Again 5-7-24 This My 4<sup>th</sup> Time Take  
Test here. I been in Special Ed. Classes  
in School Since 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, I am  
hearing Impaired, in left ear Since  
birth, Now I wear two hearing Aids.  
I had Law Clerks do all my legal  
Paper Works, I am A first Time  
Offender, I have Only been in  
what they Call The hole as Of Seg-  
for Petty Charges, Mainly, not  
beable to hear Co's Orders.  
I am Under The Accountability  
Charge Only.



1st Degree Murder, Consp to Commit  
Murder, I was Sentence ~~60~~ 60 YRS-  
by Judge Dunn, (Retired now) State  
offer the 16 YRS- in A four Day  
Jury Trial Oct 23rd 2006 - Oct 26th 2006  
I Refused because I was not Guilty  
of this, I did not know, or ever seen  
the ~~VICTIMS~~ <sup>VICTIMS</sup> I was Accused of.  
I, Nor my, Witnesses were not  
allowed to take the Witnesses  
Stand. So Jury have NO Choice  
but to find ME Guilty. because  
Defense did not Speak. I filed  
Reief Judgements from 2007 - All deny.  
(to 2022) So I filed A Executive  
Clemency Dec 2021) It Got on the  
July 2022 docket, Docket # 38164,  
I then filed A Post-conviction Under  
the Accountability Law - Safe-T ACT  
10/12/2023, And been on Zoom Court  
Apr 18 - 2024) Feb 2nd 2024) And Do not  
have A Lawyer or Public Defender,  
Judge Vaughn A New Judge was  
trying to find me A Public Defender.  
The Accountability Law Stated You  
Must not had been At the Crime  
or Act in the Crime, Which I was  
no where Around I have



have witnesses whom can prove that  
without a reasonable doubt, now keep  
in mind everyone of the state witnesses,  
had something to gain, for lying on the  
witnesses stand, either making deals,  
with state, all charges pending against  
Jackie Jackson, dropped by state.

but above all everyone of them  
wanted to get back at me & of the  
four of the co-defendants did not like  
me, Gangloff, & Eck, which are both out  
on the street. Wolfe had a motive, she  
did not want me, back with my ex  
or my boyfriend Mike, and she was  
very un-happy when my dad caught  
David Linder, Wolfe boyfriend of  
4 days, getting drugs from Jackie  
Jackson, Linder & David Linder, and  
Jackie Jackson both worked for my  
dad. My dad fired both of them.  
he told me when I got back from  
Oklahoma City, that Brent, and I  
was to take Linder back to St.  
Wolfe was <sup>met</sup> Louis MO, 8-23-2005 At (6:00 AM.)  
Linder brought in the Jackson  
House, for drugs. Now what been  
said Jackie Jackson, owed a drug



dealer in St. Louis MO. And if I or  
my witnesses would have gotten  
to take The Stand. I would not be  
in Prison Today. I had A Iron Clad  
(Alibi) wife was very upset with me, that's  
why she turned State too. So the Reason  
why I believe I should be sought for  
Release, due to overcrowding of  
Logan Correctional Center. The Prison Can  
hardly feed us all, Cannot cloth us all,  
Birds in Chaw hall, Black Mold, Toxic in  
The Water, Housing units falling Apart  
Bathroom leaking water all The floor,  
UN-Staffed, lockdown Mails backed up  
Sometimes don't get A Mail bag for  
house, Hu 6 Suppose ADA, Medical,  
disable, Eldery, And If not, There  
over here All The time, Hearing Impaired Cannot  
use the phone, A lot of Staff Conduct  
Going on. Other Housing units just  
walking on other houses, like Hu 6  
5-11-24) from Hu 8) It Awful  
Dayroom N-Wing) South Wing Gates  
Always open, It not safe since  
Cj's have heard About The closing  
of Logan Correctional Center.



So The Only STAFF takeing Care of Issues  
When You Write them are The Wazors.  
They Got the Job done, My Medical  
HCU. doesnot Know Why Iam haveing  
nose bleeds on going Since (2019)

The HCU. doesnot Care for All our  
Medical Needs, [ADA] Person doesnot  
take Care of ADA\*ADA/Hearing Impaired  
Needs. HCU ADM-doesnot take Care of  
The Patients that Are on (Hule) That Are  
In Custintance, And phycially Therapy  
doesnot make the women Get up out  
Wheel Chairs (that walk) Neglect of them.  
Thuy Set in Solid in dispers, Their Women  
Got Open Sores, ADA Arenot CNA but  
Which Are ADA but Certified OR Proper  
Training. Trans Gender beating up  
Women being ABgressive toward the  
Women, and Sexual Mis-Conduct Several  
times. So This is not A Safe Environment  
for Individual IN Custody. That Are Sentence  
to A long time, to be in prison. Iam in hope  
That My Letter Will inspire Many Release  
Women, of inmates, that Are first time Offenders)  
And have A Outdate on paper. Dued to  
The Closing of Logan Correctional Center  
Thank You for Your time Treenia Cotner  
R807496-N-11

Ms. Vivian Mitchell R79013  
Logan Correctional Center  
P.O. Box 1000  
Lincoln, IL 62656

5-13-24

Commission on Government  
Forecasting and Accountability  
Attn: Facility Closure  
802 Stratton Building  
Springfield, IL 62756

Dear Sir,

Logan Correctional Center  
need to be closed; There is  
black mold in the Gym building  
and Library at the Vocational  
Center. There is toxins (feces)  
in the water. The women's bath  
room on unit 6 North wing  
fluds.

Unit 6 is suppose to be only



ADA, disable and Medical needs living on unit 6. There are ex-ADAs who quit or was fired from their jobs and now work at other jobs. Commissary dorm specialists, porters on other units.

I have been incarcerated for 20 years. I have done enough time in prison. I should be released. The prison is over crowed. And I am rehabilitated. I have earned many certificates. Please release me from prison. I am 60 years old.

Sincerely,

Vivian Mitchell



Julia Gutierrez Y21292

Logan Correctional Center

Opponent of closing

May 10, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

I am an inmate at Logan Correctional Center. I have been here 7 years and have 14 more to go. I have always felt very blessed to be at this location. The grounds are beautiful + well kept with lots of beautiful flowers. Our houses are so good + sturdy brick buildings with nice floors, adequate bathrooms, and a nice big dayroom with real chairs - not just metal tables with metal seats. I love having windows that open so we can get a breeze and hear the birds. I don't care for air conditioning - I'd take windows any day. We get to walk to meals, passes, groups, and jobs. We have a super big yard with baseball, sand volleyball, a track for walking + tennis courts. We have lovely patios that we can enjoy every day. One very big positive is that we are not locked into our rooms but are free to go to the bathroom for toilets and showers. I very much dislike having a toilet in my room.

We have a good healthcare center, good program center, good cafeteria + adequate library.

I understand the old buildings have some issues but noting that can't be addressed. I don't feel that my health is in jeopardy.

We get over 4 hours of dayroom every day. I don't know how people handle being locked in a little cell for 23 hrs a day. I hope I don't have to find out. It seems inhumane.

I work in our big vegetable garden. We have over 3 acres in veggies. I love it. At home I always had a garden and I did gardening for people as well. It brings me such a feeling of freedom and happiness. We also supply the kitchen with lots of good fresh food.

Please, please reconsider and keep us here in our houses at Logon.

Very Sincerely,

Julie Montierrey

5-13-24

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you concerning the closing of  
Leger Women Division.

I am praying you may be able to help the  
ladies that are elderly, sickly and have done half of  
their time. There are alot of women in here that  
have health issues that are not being taken care of  
properly, due to the fact that they cannot keep doctors,  
nurses or any medical personal for a long period of  
time.

I have been incarcerated for 19 years since than  
I have been in and out of the hospital within the last  
2 years at least 8 times and not counting all the emergency  
visits to receive blood and iron transfusions. I have filed  
twice for the Joe Coleman Medical release but have been  
denied, did a clemency and has been sitting on gouvors  
desk for 3 years. I have many health issues that have  
not been addressed. I need 2 knee replacements, a hip  
replacement and a wire put on my pacemaker. I have  
specialist that I go to for my heart, stomach, my  
melanoma. I am 67 years old and have many children  
as well as grandchildren that are willing to support me  
and take care of my medical needs.

I am praying you would be able to help the  
elderly to get out before we die in here from the  
conditions of this facility. The water, black mold,  
as well as asbestos. Most of this facility is not safe



for humans to live in.

Please help the elderly instead of letting  
the young ones who keep coming back.

Thank You

God Bless

James James R 86711

P.O. Box 1000

Lexicon, IL 62656

May 12, 2024

## R.E. Logan Correctional Center

I am 65 year old female inmate at Logan Correctional Center at Lincoln Illinois.

I am first time offender, charged with First degree murder, sentenced to 30 yrs at 100%. At the time of my crime I had been subjected to domestic abuse for 25 years at the hands of my then husband.

I was allowed to be examined by Psychiatrist who diagnosed me as suffering from domestic abuse as well as PTSD.

My presiding judge refused to allow said Psychiatrist to testify on my behalf and as such no evidence for my defense was allowed.

I was sentenced to serve 30 years and began sentence at Juvet Correctional in March 2011. In March 2013 Juvet was closed

due to deteriorating conditions of buildings, and entire female population was moved to Logan Correctional Center.

Since March 2013 there has been ever increasing issues with Logan Correctional Center.

Health care has slowly become harder to obtain. The nursing staff is constantly changing and majority of staff doesn't believe any complaints an inmate has.

We have problems with keeping doctors and Nurse Practitioners, Physicians Assistants. It is hard to get prescriptions refilled in timely manner.

Eye doctor and dentist are very hard to get in to see. Meanwhile vision issues and teeth problems grow worse and often can't be fixed.

Health problems aren't tended to in a timely manner. Resulting

in additional problems.

I have C.O.P.D, Fibromyalgia, Neuropathy, Arthritis, Cataracts, hearing loss that I have had serious problems being addressed. I have been experiencing heart issues that need evaluation from outside health providers.

Also there are various concerns over safety here in Logan Correctional. The high aggression levels are being placed along with lower aggression levels, many inmates are faced with intense levels of bullying and intimidation from other high aggressive individuals.

Inmates can't go to Correctional Officers for problems as said Officers are not concerned nor do they care for safety of individuals. Officers are more concerned with finding employment elsewhere, Counselors have no options



other than dropping a request to Internal Affairs or even Warden.

Internal Affairs offer no assistance when inmate is facing problems concerning other inmate. Often - Internal Affairs will tell other inmate the name of individual who has voiced concern.

Thus what should have been confidentiality is broken and result is worse problem for inmate.

The condition of living facilities are very bad. There is black mold everywhere. Bathrooms have standing pools of water from leaking pipes. Tiles in bathroom are missing and black mold is seen on tile, tile grout, floors, ceilings and fixtures. Even the individual cells have black mold on walls. There is



visible black mold on flooring of each housing unit. Due to age of each housing unit, the interior wall structure is shifting which causes great difficulty in opening and closing each cell door.

There are places in housing units where drywall of ceiling has fell onto floor.

The power source is at times unpredictable due to old wiring, and receptables.

We aren't given proper diets from kitchen. Majority of meals we are given child size portions. There are most meals with beans and or rice. Many inmates have health issues that require special diets but health care doesn't care nor does dietary personnel.

As a 66 yr old inmate with health problems, I

have served almost half of my sentence, I feel that considering my age and that I am first time offender, that I should be allowed to be released due to inability of IDOC to provide adequate and safe conditions during my incarceration.

In addition the facility has had serious problems with contaminated drinking water which will have serious health issues for everyone in the future.

I sincerely hope you can consider my problems and let me be considered for early release. I do have a secure parole site waiting for my release.

Thank You  
Myra L. Osborne R86898  
Logan Correctional Center  
P.O. Box 1000  
Lincoln, Illinois 62656



TO: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
ATTN: Facility Closure.  
802 Stratton Building.  
Springfield, IL 62706

From: Carmen G. Stonemark Y37534  
Logan C.C. 8-S-14 PO Box 1000  
Lincoln, IL 62656

Regarding: May 14, 2024.

- Facility Being Closed: Logan Women C.C.
  - Individual in Custody ID# Y37534.
  - I am opposing the closing of Logan.
  - I am from Southern Illinois - Carbondale - Jackson County.
- My family are advanced in age and for them to travel more than 3-3.5 hr to see me would be difficult. As it is Logan C.C. is in the middle of the state and it is convenient and fair for those in the South and those in the North areas to travel and visit with their loved ones.
- Here at Logan C.C. we have an excellent Mental Health Program. Our grounds are beautiful and well maintained. Furthermore our facility here at Logan C.C. are sturdy brick buildings that can be remodeled and fixed. As a matter of fact there is some remodeling and constructions on unit #9 as we speak.
- I know we are in prison and it should not be comfortable but we are humans too despite the crimes we committed and this place - Logan Women C.C. has a home atmosphere.
- I would very much like to remain here at Logan for the remaining of my sentence + 9 years.

Thank you and God bless you all!

Carmen G. Stonemark.

P.S please excuse my misspells English not my 1<sup>st</sup> language.

May 13, 2024

Commissioner Government  
Forecasting and Accountability  
ATTN: Facility Closure  
802 Stratton Building  
Springfield, IL 62706

Angela Wells B36962  
Logan Correctional Center  
Apponent

The type of Testimony I would  
like to give: Written Statement Filed

I am writing on behalf of the  
Closing of Logan Correctional  
Center. My name is Angela Wells  
B36962. I am a First-Time  
Offender with a First Degree  
Murder charge. I have  
an 2022 Executive Clemency  
in that is sitting on the Governor  
Desk. I feel that First Time



2)

Offender should be released if they have been a productive member of society.

To date I have served 23 years of my 40 year sentence.

I have completed a lot of education with a degree and behavior modification for 10 years. I worked as a Law Clerk for 12 years I in Haight CC 10 in Logan C.C.

I don't want to be moved to another prison. I should be released back into society. I have earned my way just ~~by~~ look at my Master Bill. It speaks for itself. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully Submitted  
Angela Wells  
R36962

Ms. Vivian Mitchell R19013  
Logan Correctional Center  
P.O. Box 1000  
Lincoln, IL 62456

5/14/24

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

Regarding: First letter

Dear Sir,

Logan Correctional Center  
should be shut down and closed.  
They are overcrowded. The HCU  
(Health Care Unit) do not take  
care of us. After surgery they  
won't let you see your specialist/surgeon  
they won't give you antibiotics  
and the medicine prescribed by

a Medical Doctor, surgeon, and Specialist. Dr. Fennell is a veterinarian not a doctor. She isn't a Medical Doctor. She is an animal doctor. Logan Correctional Center do not have a M.D. (Medical Doctor).

Inmates have the right to proper medical care by a M.D. (see 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment)

There are birds living in the Chow hall. They eat and breed in the Dietary chow hall.

Can you please bring the paroll board back and let us inmates be called for paroll? I have been incarcerated for 20 years for crimes I didn't do. I stole a car that was involved in a murder. I was used as a scape goat because I stole the car which was left abandon after it was involved in a crime. I regret stealing the car. And I will never do that again. I want to work and earn a living when I'm out of prison.

2



I don't have a lawyer. After 20 years in prison. I can't afford one. I can only hope to paroll out. I am rehabilitated and I want to start my own business. (in due time)

I have done a clemency Docket #39213. I submitted it October of 2023. I am waiting for their decision. Hopefully you would put in a good word so I can be released.

Sincerely,

Vivian Mitchell

P.S. Being a woman I qualify for grants and loans for business.



RE-Closing of Prison Logon 5-15-0  
he 110 Again. I am writing  
you again because, I wrote you  
of all the issue here at Egg  
Co. And to my total shock, I  
filed A Clemency 2021 It Got Rec  
July 2022 Docket Number #3816  
Be Aware, I told you Staff  
Does not Do their jobs here. So  
be Advised April 16th 2024  
Governor denied me. I just  
Got the letter 5-14-24, So I  
thought you all should know  
because when I wrote the letter  
I was not of knowledge of it.  
A lot of women are scared the  
letter on it was just sitting  
in mail room since 5-9-2024  
which I do not know why they  
ask for us to write out Clemency  
to just get denied, because most  
of us women do not have lawyer  
or money to get the Clemency  
Approved. So I am in real  
hope that Maybe Due to

I told A few and many  
women to write you all,  
The over crowded Issues And  
many others I list to you  
all. That, you all can talk  
to IDOC Springfield Director  
To do A Big Release Of first time  
offenders, That done A decade  
of their time And has A  
out date, And work something  
out for the ones whom have life  
I thank you again for your  
time in this matter.

God Bless  
Trenia Cotner  
R80749  
CON-11



# Facility of Closure

The Committee of the Commission Closure:

I would like to start off with myself. My name is Laura Johnson.

I have two kids at home. I have job opportunities waiting on me to take care of my family.

I was sentenced to 20 yrs at 50%. I have been locked up since 2018. I have 1 yr left to do. I am a first time offender.

Since I have been here, in these conditions, I have worked the entire time. Landscaping, Dietary, Janitor, Laundry, Truck & Receiving. I went to school for 1 year. I have completed Westcare program. I have completed Drug Education program, Anger management, and Building Goals. I am waiting on shipment and acceptance to Decatur. I have never been to segregation, or any serious trouble. I would like to be considered for early release due to the closure of Facility.

Under the conditions I have lived in ~~that~~ have endured, since I have been incarcerated.

The conditions I have lived in house 9. There was 3 inches of water on the bathroom floor. I couldn't wear shower shoes to go to the bathroom. We had to wear shoes. A girl used a push broom to push the water to a drain. The ceiling was falling in, in the shower on me one day. The dayroom ceiling was falling in. The windows were old and brittle with black mold. My room window got broke out after I moved to house 1. House 9 is now condemned. House 1 the ceiling was falling in, in the dayroom. They patched it. It was way over 9 or 10 ft long. The windows were old and moldy, brittle. They also had to replace all the toilets and sinks. We had to fill up the toilets with water to flush them. The warden came, the wing took a vote and it had to be fixed, while we lived there.



Then, every house moved to a different house while they installed new windows. I moved to house 6 while going to school. For the elderly and handicapped the conditions here are not for the handicapped. The black mold in the walls, the chair for them to wash themselves, broke and the lady got hurt. They had to call a code, to help her up. There's a broken steam pipe in the bathroom, it has an awful stench, makes me gag. They are working on the sewer pipe outside our house now. We are still drinking the water. It is so over-crowded, I am living on the elderly house. There is no room for population. They are putting people from Seg on the house - aggressive people & keep separate people. There are ~~no~~ ~~no~~ ~~no~~ mental health ladies that need to be on care. They are unstable to live on grounds

but they are living on house  
because there is no room.  
All the medical people, and  
disabled, and ADA's feel  
threatened by having these  
people on the unit, where  
they are permanently placed  
for their medical conditions.

I believe it would be a  
very good idea for Springfield  
to come together to do a mass  
release for first time offenders,  
that have short time, and  
women that have elementary in, (and  
with an out date, plus a (in col  
long sentence should be able  
to see the parole board or have  
done 15 or more of their time,  
and lifers that have been  
productive since their in-  
carceration, should be able  
to see the parole board.  
I pray that you being the  
Committee should consider all  
~~others~~ that I under lined  
should see the parole board.

continue please

you will see a dramatic  
change in the women's  
population, and the female  
prisons. Thank you for your  
consideration, and your  
time.

Sincerely,

Laura Johnson  
Laura Johnson  
#440332



To The Committee  
of closing facility,

5-19-24

I Sherryl A Simpson B48963 I Reside  
At HUCNB, Which is Suppose To  
Medical, dis-Able ADA, Which is None  
Since (2015) About My Self I Have  
been Dufight, Lincoln, Logan betwee  
all this hands down Logan, C.C. Does not  
The Rules or give the tools to keep  
me on A Straight path, that I end  
up back in Prison. I was Sentence  
to 10 yrs - 85% I have Worked Since  
I been here (2023) Worked the  
whole time, HCU does not help  
us Medically. I know walk with  
cued to My legs Giving out,  
I Surgery. I donot feel safe  
here, You Got Trans Genders, Are  
women whom are taking Hom  
shots, That are Aggressive.  
They (HCU) Fighting. Placement  
Of these people, Suppose Medica  
dis-able, ADA, Elderly and,  
It not on HCU) They Are So



Overcrowded that, They have placed  
Aggressive, from (Seg) hole K.S.F.  
lights, Also The, is Allowing 307  
by the Book to Come on A-Wing  
from The S-Wing And from Other  
housing units, Just Walk in The  
Gates, All of Our Safety is At Risk  
Due to The Overcrowded Prison  
I believe That all As Whole First  
Offenders, whom has been  
Product, Since They been in, I do  
Not been sent to The hole again,  
Should be Able to See The Parole  
Board, Time 15 YRS - IN OR MORE  
Lifers whom have been Productive  
Should Get to See the Board too.

Those that Court Or Clemency in  
Should be Allowed to See the Board.  
I myself, believe I Should be able  
to, See the Parole Board, Due to  
The Closing of Logan Correctional  
Center. Thank you for Have  
Your time A Bless  
Day.

Sherron Simpson 6/1/9

300 N. Hills

Apt 22

Bessemer, Mi

Dear Sir,

I have <sup>heard</sup> there may be a closing of the Logan women's prison. May I speak up on behalf of the lady prisoners? Thank you.

First my name is Donna Francisco & I write to two lady prisoners. They are concerned about the closure.

At present the Logan facility may close for various reasons. I am an opponent to the Logan closure.

The women like the Logan prison.

The grounds are beautiful. They get to walk to meals, passes, and groups. They have windows that open to let in the breeze and the birds songs (good for mental healing). They have a huge yard with baseball, volleyball, Tennis and a big walking trail. We have a mental health program.

They don't want to be locked up in a tiny cell - it's inhumane.

They have a large area to grow their own veggies for the prisoners to eat. Cheaper on



(1)

the prison budget to grow their own food,  
It's more humane to allow them out in  
the prison yard for exercise for several  
hours each day. The sunshine heals their  
bodies & mind. They sleep better at night  
for being outdoors for more hours.

Would you want to be cooped up in a tiny  
cell 24 hrs a day or be outdoors more?

The fresh air is a real blessing to their mind  
and body.

Please keep the Logan prison open for  
healthy prisoners.

Sincerely,  
Danna Francois

**Testimony of Michael Newman,  
Deputy Director, AFSCME Council 31**

**Commission on Government  
Forecasting and Accountability**

**May 9, 2024**

My name is Michael Newman, and I am the Deputy Director for AFSCME Council 31, which represents most Department of Corrections employees. I am accompanied this morning by Council 31 Research Director Martha Merrill. We appreciate the opportunity to testify this morning.

AFSCME is strongly opposed to the proposed facility closures. While AFSCME supports rebuilding Stateville and supports building a new facility on or near Logan's current location, our union believes that the DOC's proposed path would needlessly and drastically disrupt the lives of the department's employees, the lives of individuals who are currently incarcerated, their families, and the economic well-being of several communities. In fact, we believe that the harmful consequences of closing Stateville during construction, and replacing Logan with a facility in Northern Illinois, are far clearer than any argument in favor of the department's plan.

First, with respect to Stateville, this Commission should reject the Department's recommendations for the following reasons:

1. The Department's recommendations do not comply with the intent or the letter of the State Facilities Closure Act. Merely stating that the potentially harmful impact of the proposed closures will be addressed, as the recommendations frequently do, is not an acceptable substitute for actually providing answers as to how such impacts will be mitigated.
2. The information provided in the department's exhibits about repairs needed for continued operations at Stateville while the new facility is being built is both outdated and inflated.
3. Harm to employees, individuals in custody, and families is minimized by the department without explanation. This proposal's impact on local communities is not adequately or accurately addressed.
4. Safety issues, as well as other negative impacts on the operations of the department, are not acknowledged in even the slightest manner.

5. The recommendations completely ignore the very significant adverse impact the closure will have on minorities and women.
6. The closure represents an abrupt abandonment of strategic planning that was only recently developed for restructuring the department in line with the Administration's vision for DOC and, specifically, for Stateville.

The State Facilities Closure Act requires the Department to include the locations to which the Stateville functions and employees would be moved in its recommendation for closure. The Department's recommendation provides no information with respect to functions being moved, and almost no information as to how many employees will be affected.

The Department is required to conduct an adverse impact analysis in conjunction with its layoff plan. Why not do that now, so that this Commission has the information available to it when formulating its opinion? It will show that the Stateville facility closure will undeniably have a disparate impact on the DOC employees who are women and people of color. According to the department's own workforce analysis, Region 1, which is the region which includes Stateville:

- Has more employees of color than all other regions combined;
- Includes approximately 68% of the DOC's black employees;
- Is the region with the largest Latino workforce (11.14); and
- Has the largest percentage of female employees (41.13%).

The DOC recommendation does not adequately address the impact on these employees or any other employees, for that matter. There is no information as to how many employees could be absorbed by the Northern Reception and Classification center and how many would have to either relocate or be laid off. As best we can determine, close to 300 employees could not be absorbed by the NRC. Moreover, the scant information provided is contradictory, as the recommendation states that there will be 1,000 jobs available within a 65-mile radius of Stateville. Just a couple of paragraphs later, however, and in the recommendations concerning Logan, the Department states that those 1,000 positions are spread across the entire state.

And even if there are vacancies at facilities like Sheridan or Pontiac, those are very likely too difficult a commute for Stateville employees, given that many are already traveling from Chicago and its suburbs and that most are frequently working overtime which can make their workday as long as 16 hours.

Some historical context is useful when assessing the thinness of the department's proposals compared to the loftiness of its rhetoric. Since at least 2020, the Department of Corrections has been on a very different path, an ambitious path, from which it is now suddenly pivoting. Over the last several years, the Department has embarked on a restructuring plan focused on rehabilitation, reduced recidivism, improved family reunification efforts, and expanded re-entry programs. With respect to Stateville, the plan is already well underway. The facility is in the process of being converted from a maximum to a multi-level security facility that would be repurposed as a re-entry facility with additional and even more robust programming. Family reunification is closely linked to Stateville's proximity to the families of most of the individuals in custody.

Much of what was laid out for Stateville in that plan is now in place. Why is the Administration deciding its efforts at Stateville, which had been described as a critical component in reducing recidivism through programming and family reunification, should suddenly be abandoned for the next five years? No information has been provided as to how programming will continue for those individuals currently in programs, let alone for individuals seeking to get into programs. And the logistical issues with respect to family reunification are obvious.

The DOC recommendation overstates the cost of keeping Stateville open during the construction of the new facility. The Department's restructuring plan included making significant repairs to the buildings still in operation. Many of those repairs have now been completed. Concrete issues have been resolved. With considerable investment, repairs to the quarterhouse, commissary, dining, main gate, and gym have been completed, as well as electrical and other remediation work.

The now outdated CGL study, cited by the department, overestimates the amount of deferred maintenance required to maintain current operations at Stateville because it included deferred maintenance costs for buildings which had already been shuttered and does not include the deferred maintenance that has been completed since August of 2022. Stateville buildings in operation are now in an acceptable condition for the time period involved in constructing the new facility.

Stateville is not just a stand-alone facility. It is a hub supporting several nearby satellites. In DOC's filings, there is no explanation as to how the Northern Reception and Classification Center will be able to function without the administrative, medical, and security support that is now provided by the Stateville Correctional Center.

There is no information provided about where the Department will move individuals who are currently incarcerated at Stateville. Consequently, questions

concerning safety, security, programming, medical care, and family reunification are simply evaded. For example, 60% of individuals in custody at Stateville are there for medical reasons, including chronic conditions, related to proximity to Chicago area health care facilities and specialized care available at the Stateville hospital now slated for closure. How will those individuals receive the medical care they need?

According to the Department's website, Stateville has more classes and educational programming than any other correctional facility in Illinois. The Department simply states that the closure will not significantly disrupt programming, but provides no additional information or explanation as to how it will ensure that the incarcerated individuals at Stateville will have uninterrupted access to the same kind of educational and vocational opportunities. Recent press stories indicate that nonprofits providing some of those educational programs are not convinced that DOC's plan can be accomplished without significantly disrupting their work. Simply providing reassurances, without explanation, is not sufficient and does not satisfy the requirements of the State Facilities Closure Act.

Every available indicator shows that our state's prisons are becoming more dangerous for the employees that work in them and for the individuals in custody as well. Relocating all of these individuals from Stateville to correctional facilities throughout the state will only make this problem worse as many of these facilities are already experiencing violent incidents at a time when they are seriously understaffed. And the Department has acknowledged that it already lacks a sufficient number of maximum-security beds.

The glaring omissions in the department's recommendation for closure of Stateville Correctional Center point to extremely problematic outcomes for DOC employees, individuals in the department's custody, and systemwide.

With regard to Logan Correctional Center, AFSCME supports the building of a new women's correctional facility, but strongly opposes the indication that the new facility would be located elsewhere in the state. Moving forward with a plan that does not involve building the new facility at or near its current location will cause extreme disruption in the lives of the individuals in custody and correctional staff.

Some of the concerns expressed concerning the closure of Stateville also relate to the proposed closure of Logan. The overriding question with respect to Logan is simply "Why has this been presented to the Commission at all?" Instead of a plan, the Department is only suggesting a "possible" plan while not ruling out others.

The Department's recommendations do not comply with the intent or the letter of the State Facilities Closure Act. The Department is simply asking the Commission for pre-approval well in advance of whenever the Department comes up with an actual plan sometime within the next five years. The Department's so-called recommendation states only that it is "considering moving Logan from its current location" and that no final decision has been made. What exactly is the Commission being asked to approve?

Harm to employees is not addressed with any validity whatsoever. Harm to individuals in custody, and to families, is either glossed over or simply ignored. The impact on communities is again glossed over and only supported by so-called studies that lack validity.

This proposed closure once again represents an abrupt abandonment of the plan that was only recently developed for restructuring the department that was focused on reducing recidivism and family reunification.

What little information the department submitted to the committee for review is rife with problems. For example, the Department suggests that there will only be minimal impact on staff who have to relocate. The Department identifies two correctional facilities within close proximity of Logan—Lincoln Correctional Center (next door) and Decatur Correctional Center—that could serve as institutions to which current staff could move. But there are currently 454 staff at Logan and, at those two facilities combined, only a total of 54 budgeted vacancies. The Department then points to facilities that are within a 60-mile radius, thereby suggesting that a daily round-trip commute of 120 miles is not a hardship. But even when those additional two facilities are added in, that only provides another 25 budgeted positions.

Announcing that the department plans to move forward to close and move Logan in the next few years will exacerbate current difficulties in staffing the state's correctional facilities. It will be extremely difficult to retain current staff and bring in new cadets to Logan during that period with the threat of closure and layoffs looming.

Furthermore, should the Department ultimately decide to move the location of Logan to the Stateville campus, as it has stated as a preferred destination, the hardship on individuals in custody and their families will also be substantial. 60% of those incarcerated at Logan have a sentencing county outside the greater Chicagoland area. The only other female facility in the state is in Decatur. Decatur is a minimum security, dormitory style facility, and could safely house very few women from the medium/maximum population at Logan. Contrary to what the Department implies, there will be no so-called "regionalization." For the majority of the women currently at Logan,



the Department's stated goal of family reunification would be undermined by moving Logan north.

It's also worth noting that the department's proposal to close Logan and replace it with a facility in Will County involves building and operating a co-correctional facility, which is something that the DOC's own exhibits—provided to this Commission—show is extremely difficult to do well. The department's previous experience with co-correctional facilities should underscore that point. Given the many pitfalls they present, the lack of any significant detail in this recommendation should give this body pause about concurring with such an undertaking.

Lastly, it is worth noting that the recommendation's assessment of the economic impact on the community if Logan is closed is simply not credible. The economic impact study submitted as part of the DOC's COGFA filings indicates the closure and relocation of Logan Correctional Center could result in the loss of 451 direct jobs and only 48 induced jobs. This is an incredibly flawed projection. Using standard measurements of what is called the "multiplier" effect, there is no question that at least hundreds of indirect jobs would also be lost.

The Department should be told to withdraw its submission to this body since no actual plan has been submitted.

All of the harmful consequences we have raised in our testimony today flow directly from two unnecessary features of the department's proposed course of action: the closure of Stateville almost immediately and the relocation of Logan whenever a new facility is built. Nothing in the DOC's COGFA filings supports the department's plan to close Stateville during the construction process or its recommendation to move Logan over 100 miles away from its current location. Everything we have said here today supports keeping these facilities open, and embedded in their current communities, throughout the process of constructing new replacement facilities. The department is not just entirely capable of building modern, safe, and state-of-the-art facilities without the needless and drastic disruptions that these closures would cause, it is entirely incapable of pursuing its own plan of action without putting lives and livelihoods at risk. For all of these reasons, I urge this Commission to reject the Department of Corrections' recommendation to close Stateville Correctional Center and Logan Correctional Center.

# **STATEVILLE & LOGAN CORRECTIONAL CENTERS**

**IDOC's Closure Plans:**

## **The Wrong Course for Illinois**

May 2024



# **IDOC's Closure Plans: The Wrong Course for Illinois**

## **Executive Summary**

**AFSCME Council 31 supports building a new women's correctional facility, but strongly opposes the relocation of Logan Correctional Center.**

Likewise, **AFSCME supports building a new facility at Stateville Correctional Center, but strongly opposes closing the current facility before the new one is built** and opened. (IDOC has implied the current facility could be closed as soon as September—a rushed timeline that should be slowed to ensure sound answers to the many questions raised here and elsewhere.)

**The current IDOC proposal would threaten layoffs with disparate harm to employees of color, worsen staffing shortages, cause upheaval in the lives of correctional employees and individuals in custody, disrupt correctional operations and destabilize other facilities.**

Specific to Stateville, although IDOC has cited its consultant CGL's report as the rationale for the closure and reconstruction proposal, department COGFA filings omit major parts of that report which contradict its plan.

## **THREAT OF LAYOFFS & DISPARATE IMPACT**

**IDOC does not identify a sufficient number of vacant positions at nearby facilities for the nearly 500 Stateville CC employees whose jobs are threatened**

**by closure.** There are just **44 vacancies at the Joliet Treatment Center** (10 miles away) and **24 vacancies at Sheridan CC** (30 miles). IDOC fails to disclose how many if any vacancies are available at the Northern Reception & Classification (NRC) center on Stateville's grounds.

**Closing Stateville would disproportionately harm Black, Latino, and women workers.** Region 1 where Stateville is located has:

- More employees of color than all other regions combined;
- 68 percent of the department's Black employees;
- Its largest proportion of women (41 percent); and
- Its largest Latino workforce (11 percent).

Similarly, **the two correctional facilities near Logan CC (Lincoln and Decatur CCs) have just 54 vacant positions between them.** The next two closest (Jacksonville and Taylorville CCs) are 60 miles away and have just 25 vacancies combined. In total that's **fewer than 80 jobs available in nearby IDOC facilities for Logan CC's 454 employees.**

The economic impact study submitted to COGFA by IDOC indicates that **closing and relocating Logan CC could result in the loss of \$68.5 million in economic activity** in local communities.

## **WORSEN STAFFING SHORTAGES**

Logan CC now has just 66 percent of its authorized headcount and 85 percent of its budgeted headcount.

Closing and moving Logan CC will, over the three-to-five-year anticipated timeline, **exacerbate this shortage as employees seek to transfer to other facilities or state agencies** in order to remain employed in the local area.

Because of the lack of viable alternatives for Stateville employees, closure **will likely result in the loss of experienced IDOC employees** who retire or resign rather than face significant travel or relocation.

## **UPHEAVAL FOR INDIVIDUALS IN CUSTODY**

Because **71% of Stateville CC's 435 individuals in custody are from the seven-county Cook-and-collars region**, relocation elsewhere in the state will undoubtedly lengthen the time and distance their families and others must travel to visit.

Meanwhile, **just 40% of the 1,039 women housed at Logan CC are from the Cook-and-collars region**. There is no evidence for IDOC's claim that relocating them to a new facility in Will County would improve access to families and social supports.

Because the only other facility for women—**Decatur CC—is a minimum-security facility inappropriate for Logan's population**, there would be no option for offenders from central and southern Illinois to remain near these supports.

Stateville CC operates a medical facility with an ER, triage center, dialysis, imaging, lab, in-patient and long-term beds, a dental clinic and specialists including mental health treatment, physical therapy, podiatry, optometry and more. Some **60 percent of the Stateville population is on "medical hold" and requires frequent care**. IDOC's filing to COGFA is silent on how the medical needs of individuals in custody will be met if Stateville is closed.

## DISRUPT CORRECTIONAL OPERATIONS

IDOC data already indicates a steady **rise in staff assaults** and incidents among individuals in custody, and in disciplinary transfers for dangerous or disruptive behavior—**especially at the maximum- and medium-security facilities likely to receive individuals from Stateville CC** if it is closed. Receiving facilities will be unable to ensure safety for their staff and current population.

Closing Stateville during reconstruction and relocating Logan CC to Will County will **increase the amount of time spent transporting individuals in custody to court writs.**

It will **end or require the rebuilding from scratch of Stateville's and Logan's robust academic, career & technical education, industries, volunteer services, and treatment programs.**

Closing Stateville for up to five years will **eliminate its ancillary services such as administrative and security operations, visitor facilities, mail processing, its law library for individuals in custody**, and other services that the NRC and the minimum-security unit on its grounds depend on (importantly, including the medical services described above).

## OMISSIONS FROM IDOC FILINGS

IDOC does not accurately reflect that its consultant CGL rated much of Stateville as functional, including Cell House B, the administrative building, law library/school, vocational school and dining complex.

Further, IDOC neglects to point out that CGL found that “**Stateville has significant space within its secure perimeter to accommodate new structures**” and “there are several vacated buildings within the perimeter that could be demolished to provide additional options.”

The **department does not mention that recent investments have addressed roofing repairs and other deferred maintenance projects recently completed or already underway**, including to the commissary roof, dining complex, main gate, gym, south sallyport, electrical work, asbestos remediation, an extensive project to replace water heaters and the installation of a new fire alarm system.

While IDOC’s COGFA filing does cite a report from another consultant, HTA, it omits that the HTA report concludes that all areas of immediate concern could be repaired for just \$12 million.

# **IDOC's Closure Plans: The Wrong Course for Illinois**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Illinois Department of Corrections' initiative to build a new multi-level men's correctional facility and a new women's maximum/medium security facility could--and should—represent important progress for a correctional system too long marked by deteriorating infrastructure.

Unfortunately, the path that the department has laid out to reach those goals is misguided in the extreme and is likely to have serious adverse consequences, including: jeopardizing the safety of IDOC employees and of incarcerated individuals; intensifying the system's already severe staffing shortages; undermining important rehabilitative programming; making family visits more difficult; and creating disruption at facilities throughout the system.

The IDOC recommendation to the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (COGFA) would close down Stateville Correctional Center within approximately 180 days—moving all of the incarcerated individuals to other facilities throughout the state and laying off hundreds of employees. The facility would remain closed for 3-5 years while a new facility is being built on the Stateville grounds. The Northern Reception and Reclassification Center (NRC) and the Minimum Security Unit (MSU) would remain open on the Stateville grounds.

In the case of Logan Correctional Center, the facility would remain open during the construction process (again 3-5 years), but the new facility would not be built on or near the Logan grounds, but rather on or near the Stateville grounds in northern Illinois.

AFSCME is strongly opposed to the facility closure plan presented by IDOC. While AFSCME supports rebuilding Stateville and supports building a new facility on or near Logan's current location, our union believes that the IDOC's proposed course of action would needlessly and drastically disrupt the lives of the department's employees, the lives of individuals who are currently incarcerated, their families, and the economic well-being of several communities. In fact, we believe that the harmful consequences of closing Stateville during construction, and replacing Logan with a facility in Northern Illinois, are far clearer than any argument in favor of the department's plan.

Moreover, the department's recommendations and related arguments lack substance or supporting evidence. Merely stating that a potentially harmful impact of the proposed closures will be addressed, as the recommendations frequently do, is not an acceptable substitute for actually providing answers as to how such impacts will be mitigated. Harm to employees, individuals in custody, and families is minimized in the department's submission to COGFA without explanation. Safety issues, as well as other negative impacts on the operations of the department, are barely acknowledged at all, and certainly not meaningfully addressed. This report will examine the very real costs of the IDOC proposal for each facility and argue that there is a better course.



## **STATEVILLE CORRECTIONAL CENTER**

**ARGUMENT: “AFSCME Council 31 supports building a new facility at Stateville Correctional Center, but strongly opposes closing the current facility before a new facility has been built. Closing now would cause extreme disruption in the lives of the individuals in custody and the correctional staff.”**

### **Rash Closure Discussions**

Not one document, report, or review of the facilities at Stateville Correctional Center included in the IDOC’s COGFA filings and recommendation for closure, called for the immediate closure of the facility or support that position. In fact, the CGL report, which is heavily cited and relied upon by the department in its recommendation, found that “Stateville has significant space within its secure perimeter to accommodate new structures. Additionally, there are several vacated buildings within the perimeter that could be demolished to provide additional options.” The CGL makes this claim not once, but twice: “Stateville has significant space within its perimeter, especially if vacant buildings are demolished. We suggest the [housing] unit be sited near program/vocational space. If the IDOC proceeds with CGL’s recommendation regarding redeveloping the vacant correctional industries space as a vocational village, then the new housing should be adjacent.”

Moreover, the recommendation filed by the department indicates its rebuilding strategy may focus on utilizing and developing state-owned land adjacent to Stateville. If the plan entails rebuilding outside the current location, then this raises even more questions as to why the department is seeking an expedited closure/demolition of the facility.

The only details presented about the IDOC’s plans for Stateville are as follows: (1) Stateville will be closed approximately 180 days from March 17, 2024; (2) it will take 3-5 years to re-build a new facility; and (3) the cost will be \$450 million. Of note, the CGL report indicates the cost to construct housing for 700 new beds at Stateville would be approximately \$72.4 million and the cost to build vocational and training spaces would be \$32.6 million. Outside of this cost estimate, there are no details on the number of beds being built, the timeline for construction, or the timeline for reopening. There are no guarantees when, where or even IF a new facility will be built. In other words, there is no solid basis for embarking now on a path that is very likely to cause harm to so many.

### **Impact of Closure on Stateville Security and Non-Security Staff**

#### ***Employee Dislocation/Job Loss***

In the IDOC’s filings with COGFA recommending the closure of Stateville, the department claims that “unless an employee voluntarily chooses to be placed in a layoff status, the department does not expect that any employee will lose state employment as a part of this process.”

However, there is no clear plan for alternative employment within DOC for the nearly 500 employees who work at Stateville CC. The IDOC’s COGFA filings claim that there are

approximately 1,000 available positions at the four correctional facilities (including the NRC) which are within 65 miles of Stateville, which would provide relocation options for impacted employees when Stateville is closed. There are several reasons to doubt the department's figures, however.

First, the lack of information about vacancies within the NRC is extremely problematic. The IDOC's failure to provide this basic information could be an indication that a closure would be more disruptive than the department is suggesting publicly. Or it could be a sign that the department doesn't have any viable job opportunities for employees outside of correctional officer titles e.g., administrative employees, educational staff, library employees.

Second, the IDOC's own staffing data contradicts the claim that there are 1,000 departmental vacancies within a 65-mile radius of Stateville. Below are the differentials between current headcount and budgeted positions for correctional facilities within the radius identified by the department:

Facility	Distance	Security Vacancies	Non-Security Vacancies
NRC	N/A	?	?
Joliet Treatment Center	10 miles	30	14
Pontiac Correctional Center	63 miles	114	85
Sheridan Correctional Center	30 miles	9	15
<b>Total</b>	-	153 + NRC(?)	114 + NRC(?)

It's important to note that Pontiac CC and Sheridan CC are not viable employment alternatives for many Stateville employees who live in the Chicago area and would have to commute as much as 1.5 hours each way every day.

In the department's COGFA recommendations it claims that, with a budgeted staffing level of over 12,000 employees statewide, there are more than sufficient opportunities for Stateville employees to find employment with the IDOC. However, it is plainly evident that most of those opportunities would require relocation, disrupting the lives of Stateville employees and their families – and potentially undermining the IDOC's own plan to reopen a new facility on the grounds of Stateville.

One argument that the department has made in defense of its recommendation to close Stateville and build a new facility on its grounds, is that demographic factors and proximity to Chicago, Cook County, and the collar counties will make it easier to meet the new facility's operational needs after construction. However, this closure and the extreme disruption it will cause will most likely result in the loss of experienced IDOC employees. Given the IDOC's persistent difficulty in hiring, we believe that this proposal sorely underestimates the negative, long-term staffing ramifications if current Stateville workers retire, resign, or relocate due to the closure.

## ***Demographics***

Stateville Correctional Center and its nearby satellite facilities – the NRC and the MSU – employ “a total of 939 staff, categorized as 676 security personnel and 263 non-security employees.”

According to the IDOC’s “Fiscal Year 2024 Affirmative Action Report,” Stateville is located in Region 1 of the Illinois Department of Human Rights’ (DHR) geographical regions. According to the IDOC’s workforce analysis, Region 1:

- Has more employees of color than all other regions combined (i.e., 1,145 employees in Region 1 vs. 1,953 departmentwide),
- Is where approximately 68% of the IDOC’s Black employees work,
- Is the only region where the majority of employees (53.68%) are Black and where most of the workers (52.64%) in protective service titles are Black,
- Is the region with the largest Latino workforce overall (11.14%) and in protective service positions (13.34%), and
- Has the largest percentage of female employees (41.13%), including women in protective service titles (28.85%).

In other words, closing Stateville would disproportionately impact the IDOC’s employees of color broadly, and would harm Black, Latino, and female workers in particular.

## **Impact on Stateville’s Incarcerated Population**

### ***Location***

There are approximately 435 incarcerated individuals currently housed at Stateville Correctional Center. (This does not include the individuals in the MSU or the NRC). According to the most recent Prisoner Population Data Set, which is available on the IDOC’s website, 71% of the individuals whose “Parent Institution” is identified as Stateville Correctional Center were sentenced from the following counties: Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will. Given the proximity of Stateville to the sentencing counties of its population, relocation to facilities elsewhere in the state will undoubtedly lengthen the distance and travel time for writs and visitors.

IDOC’s filings imply that immediate closure is needed because Stateville’s housing units have small cells, lack dayroom and programming space within the housing unit, and require maintenance. The department has, however, provided no guarantee that individuals won’t be worse off in terms of facilities and programming, before even considering distance created by the relocation, in its plan to transfer out Stateville’s population. Given that, it’s doubly difficult to understand the department’s push to shutter buildings, disrupt lives, and move individuals in custody to locations far from their families.

### ***Medical Treatment***

According to medical center staff, of the current Stateville population of 435, approximately 60 percent are on a medical hold and routinely receive care at the medical center and at one of the nearby hospitals in Chicago. All individuals returning from any medical writ must be seen by the medical provider within 5 days, making the Stateville medical center an integral component of the department's overall care of the incarcerated population at Stateville.

Stateville's medical center includes an emergency room and triage center, dialysis chairs, imaging facilities, a physical therapy center, a multi-chair dentist's office, an eye doctor, a laboratory, a podiatrist and other specialists, 32 in-patient/long term beds, and a number of watch/observation beds. Fourteen individuals at Stateville are on dialysis and receive all treatment within the facility by a medical provider, and the long terms beds available at Stateville are crucial to providing secure, 24-hour medical assistance for geriatric and hospice care, as well as care for individuals that have schizophrenia, require assistance with chemotherapy, or have other chronic health conditions.

With its current population, a high volume of medical care occurs within Stateville because of the medical facilities available. In the month of April, there were: 3700 prescriptions filled, 340 physical therapy sessions conducted, 715 lab and imaging tests performed, 964 nurse sick call visits with 392 referrals issued to be seen by an in-house provider, 261 onsite doctor consults, 140 dental appointments, and hundreds more appointments at the various clinics available that target TB, diabetes, asthma, and hypertension. In addition, mental health providers saw 252 individuals and behavioral health providers saw 50 individuals.

Other IDOC facilities lack the capacity and some of the specialized medical services that Stateville has. The IDOC's COGFA filing does not address or discuss the medical needs of Stateville's current population, which are significant. If Stateville is closed and the individuals currently receiving care at the medical center – or in Chicago – are transferred to other locations, will they continue to have access to the same quality of care available at Stateville or Chicago's hospitals? Will individuals be able to withstand longer transport to see their physicians given their medical condition? If individuals are forced to switch doctors, how will the department ensure continuity of care? How will new medical writs impact the operations of receiving facilities?

This last question is of particular concern given the experience of the individuals from Stateville who were transferred to Sheridan Correctional Center in 2021. Given limited equipment and staffing, Sheridan is operationally able to conduct just four writs per day total. This means that if there are more than four medical and court writs combined on any day, medical appointments must be cancelled if alternative arrangements cannot be made with the court, such as zoom hearings. As such, staff at Sheridan attest to hundreds of medical appointments cancelled and care delayed because writs to Chicago area providers were not operationally possible.

Moreover, nowhere does the IDOC address how the department will ensure continuity and access to care for the individuals at the MSU and NRC, who also rely on the medical center on Stateville's grounds.

### ***Educational/Programming***

As part of the department's effort to implement an incentive-based population management strategy in 2020, Stateville Correctional Center has been re-configured into a multi-level facility with a focus on re-entry. According to the department's website, Stateville has more classes and educational programming than any other correctional facility in Illinois. Programming for incarcerated individuals within the correctional center and MSU include:

1. Academic (Adult Basic Education, Advanced Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education)
2. Career and Technical Education (Barbering)
3. Industries (Soap, Recycling)
4. Volunteer Services (Creative Art, Choir, Religious Bible Studies)
5. Post Secondary Education (Northwestern University through collaboration with Oakton Community College, DePaul University, North Park Theological Seminary, PNAP – non-degree, Behavior Modification, College Think Tanks, Creative Writing, Houses of Healing, Further Learning, Communication Skills, Math Skills, Finance Skills, Grief Group, Twelve Step Program )
6. Other (Library, Life Skills, Anger Management, Substance Abuse, Lifestyle Redirection, Religious Programming, Veterans Group, Community Work Crews, Counseling)
7. Music Studio (donated by Common and built in 2021)

The programming and educational opportunities at Stateville are popular. As of April 2024, approximately 120 incarcerated individuals are participating in educational and vocational programming. Stateville's programs are also sought after by individuals throughout Illinois' prison system. Several Stateville employees affirmed the existence of a wait list of incarcerated individuals seeking transfers to Stateville specifically to access the facility's programs and educational opportunities.

Per department rules, an individual in educational programming that is transferred may take the next available spot when it becomes open at the new facility so long as it is a continuation of their current educational classes. If the institution to which the individual is transferred does not have that educational course or if the individual is not currently in an educational program, then they are not given any priority and are subject to the new facility's procedures.

Thus, any closure of Stateville will all too likely significantly disrupt the rehabilitative path that incarcerated individuals at the facility are currently on– and delay or even curtail their educational opportunities and avenues for self-improvement. Again, the experience of incarcerated individuals that were transferred from Stateville to Sheridan is illustrative of this point. Eligibility for Sheridan's educational programming requires the individual to be within 7-9 months of their MSR, leaving the large majority of the 400 individuals that were transferred in 2021 without educational programming to date because their time remaining excludes them from such programming at their new institution.

Moreover, closing Stateville will eliminate educational and vocational opportunities for individuals at the MSU, which is on the NRC's grounds. Lastly, closing Stateville disrupts the strategic plan implemented by the department to reduce recidivism through programming and family reunification by establishing a multi-level and re-entry facility in northern Illinois.

### **Impact on the Northern Reception and Classification Center and IDOC Operations**

Stateville Correctional Center supports a number of satellite facilities which are heavily reliant on it, particularly the NRC and the MSU. Those facilities depend on the correctional center for their administrative functioning and security operations. The department's recommendation to close Stateville CC pays insufficient attention to the way these facilities interact and support one another.

Visits to individuals housed at the NRC occur at the correctional center because the NRC does not have secure rooms within its building to accommodate visitations. All mail and packages addressed to the NRC and MSU are processed in the correctional center's administration building because of space and equipment limitations at the NRC. The NRC has a small medical clinic and relies on the correctional center's medical center for more significant medical needs, in addition to the medical center serving as the main pharmacy, physical therapy center, eye examination center and main dental unit for the NRC. Without access to the immediate medical care the correctional center's medical center provides, the reception and classification process will slow as medical appointments will need to be conducted with providers outside the facility. To respect and fulfill their constitutional rights, incarcerated individuals at the NRC and MSU are able to utilize Stateville's extensive law library, which is housed at the correctional center. While individuals at the NRC can get items from a commissary, most goods available at the NRC are warehoused and transferred from the correctional center's grounds.

The administrative functioning of the correctional center and the NRC are intertwined to such an extent that closing the correctional center's office buildings – and transferring or laying off the non-security personnel working in those offices – would incapacitate the functioning of the NRC. Given the services these same offices and employees provide for the department, disruptions would likely be substantial, not just in the region, but systemwide. Thus, it is of particular concern that the department's recommendation provides so little information on this aspect of a closure.

### **Impact on Staff and Incarcerated Individuals at other IDOC facilities**

IDOC data indicates a steady uptick in both staff assaults and altercations among individuals in custody. As such, IDOC employees have earnest concerns that closing Stateville will be disruptive statewide and exacerbate an already problematic situation within the department.

IDOC data shows that there has been a significant increase in the number of disciplinary transfers within the system. (A disciplinary transfer may occur when an incarcerated individual assaults staff, attempts escape, engages in conspiracy to cause disruption/harm, or similar types of behavior). This attests to a growing issue with disruptive and dangerous behavior within the incarcerated population. This uptick is particularly prevalent in medium-security facilities, which are likely to receive individuals from Stateville. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, and with a

higher incarcerated population, there were 725 disciplinary transfers amongst the medium-security facilities in FY'20. In FY'23 there were 935 disciplinary transfers, despite a smaller IDOC population. It seems likely that disciplinary transfers will exceed 1,000 by June 30 of this year, meaning that FY'24 is on track to exceed FY'23's already high numbers of disciplinary transfers.

This disruptive behavior's impact on safety and security in IDOC facilities is shown in other data available through the department. One key indicator is the steady rise in the number of staff injuries and assaults. Considering the IDOC's decreasing incarcerated population, the provable increase in assaults is even more striking. There has been over a 50% increase in the staff assault and injury rate within the past five years.

Breaking down the staff assault data by facility level, there has been a steep increase in staff assaults in both medium and maximum-security facilities compared to FY'22. Specifically, there has been a 51% increase in staff assaults in medium-security facilities and a 35% increase at maximum facilities. The first eight months of FY'24 indicate a continued and alarming increase in staff assaults in medium-security facilities, where staff assaults are projected to reach 550 by the end of June. By comparison, there were 415 staff assaults in medium-security facilities in FY'23, 275 staff assaults in FY'22 and 297 staff assaults in FY'21.

The number of assaults among the incarcerated population is also growing. In FY'22 there were 1,437 violent altercations involving offenders. In FY'23 there were 1,986 such altercations. In the current fiscal year, such incidents are tracking higher when compared to FY'23. As such, projected conflicts among the incarcerated population could reach over 2,300 by the end of June.

In 2021 when the department abruptly moved some 400 incarcerated individuals from Stateville Correctional Center to Sheridan Correctional Center, the health and safety of both staff and the incarcerated population at Sheridan were endangered. The lack of programming and work opportunities for the transferred population led to significant agitation amongst the transferred group and more hostile behaviors. The frequency at which contraband is discovered-- most commonly synthetic marijuana, fentanyl and heroin-- has exploded at Sheridan since the transfers, an alarming outcome given that Sheridan is a program facility with a highly regarded drug treatment program to facilitate community re-entry.

Short staffing is a related, but discrete concern for employees at receiving facilities. Absent significant staffing improvements, if the IDOC closes Stateville and transfers its current population to its other correctional centers, those receiving facilities will not be able to ensure safety for their staff or their current population.

### **No Justification for Closure**

The IDOC's COGFA filings, which make numerous references to the physical condition of the facility, largely depend on a number of outdated studies. In many cases, the publication dates of these studies overstate their newness.

The CGL study, which is the main exhibit supporting the department's filings, was issued in May 2023. However, the information used to write the report was based on site visits to the facility conducted in August 2022. The report's datedness is responsible for some, but not all, of the issues with its findings and the state's recommendations. For example, the CGL study

overestimates the amount of deferred maintenance required to maintain current operations at Stateville because it includes deferred maintenance costs for buildings which have been shuttered and are not in use at this time.

The CGL report also focuses much of its attention on conditions at the B Unit/Quarterhouse. However, Cell House B is given a BCI rating of 70 in the report, meaning it has moderate degradation requiring corrective repair. Many of the other buildings currently being used, including the Administrative Building, are also rated in the 60-70 range, indicating that they remain functional and could continue to be used reliably throughout the rebuilding process:

- The B Unit (Quarterhouse) is rated 70
- The Administrative Building is rated 78
- The Law Library/School is rated 70
- The Vocational School is rated 67
- The Dining Complex is rated 67

In addition to the CGL study, the IDOC's COGFA filings include an assessment of the Quarterhouse written by HTA based on a visit that occurred in November of 2021. The department uses this report to support its argument for closure during the rebuilding process. But, in point of fact, the HTA report concludes that all of the areas of immediate concern (e.g., showers, exterior masonry, window issues) could be repaired for approximately \$12 million.

The newest report included in the IDOC's COGFA filings is a cost estimate to update Stateville's kitchens. That report estimated it would cost \$15.4 million to completely renovate Stateville's kitchen facilities. However, such a total renovation is not necessary. At the time of writing, the NRC is preparing for an extensive kitchen renovation, which provides a model Stateville could replicate to avoid any kitchen-related issues during construction. Specifically, the NRC is planning to use on-campus trailers for meal preparation while the IDOC is constructing a new kitchen and dining facility in that complex.

The IDOC's position that it doesn't want to put any more money into Stateville to fix or maintain its buildings is not only short sighted, it is also the most extreme, disruptive, and wasteful position to take given the fact that most of the buildings used by staff and incarcerated individuals are completely functional. Further, it willfully ignores the significant recent investments made to address roofing and other deferred maintenance issues on the grounds, as well as other capital projects currently underway. For example, in Cell House B, all lentil repairs were recently completed earlier this year, in addition to roof repairs that occurred in 2021 and 2022. Other examples of deferred maintenance projects that have been completed include roof repairs of the commissary, dining, main gate and gym as well as repair and replacement of the south sallyport gates, electrical work and asbestos remediation. An extensive project to replace water heaters occurred in 2021 and the installment of a new fire alarm system is currently under contract.

Given the fact that most Stateville buildings are currently usable, none of the IDOC's arguments in its COGFA recommendations justify closure throughout construction. They merely justify constructing a new facility.



### **Cost of Closure for FY2025**

In its recommendation for closure, IDOC anticipates that the costs to transition individuals from Stateville to other correctional centers will total around \$7 million. These transition costs include the relocation of individuals in custody (\$76,200), Staff Redeployment (\$603,800), legal costs (\$402,500), and Operational Adjustments at Receiving Facilities (\$5.75 million).

It is not clear how the department arrived at these figures, but they seem low and do not account for other potential costs, like medical costs, programming, or travel. Moreover, it seems likely that costs to receiving facilities would not be one-time costs but would continue for the duration of Stateville's closure and rebuild, which suggests that the total expenditures of this kind could well exceed \$30 million over a five-year period.

When compared to the deferred maintenance costs identified in the IDOC's COGFA filings (i.e., for the housing unit and the dietary), these costs are hard to justify. Particularly when one considers that some of the maintenance issues identified in the IDOC's filings have been addressed. Moreover, the CGL report indicates that the BCI scores for the housing units actually in use show that, although corrective repairs are or were needed, immediate replacement or closure is not necessary. In other words, the department's filings support continued use of these buildings during construction.

Comparing the cost of maintaining Stateville operations during the rebuild to the cost and disruption of closing Stateville, maintaining operation throughout the construction of a new facility is the most reasonable and rationale approach.

Moving forward with the lack of a viable plan as the department seeks to do is extremely problematic in a correctional system that shows signs of distress. Without having consulted with architects and design teams, and without even presenting limited details as to the scale and the scope of the project, it is reckless for the state to be pushing for a closure at this time. Instead, Stateville Correctional Center should remain open while IDOC takes the significant steps necessary to site, design and construct a new facility on or near its grounds.

### **LOGAN CORRECTIONAL CENTER**

**ARGUMENT: AFSCME Council 31 supports the building of a new women's correctional facility, but strongly opposes the relocation of Logan Correctional Center. Moving forward with a plan that does not involve building the new facility on or near its current location will cause extreme disruption in the lives of the individuals in custody and correctional staff, as well as jeopardizing the department's ability to hire essential staff during the construction period.**

### **Staffing Concerns**

The department's submission to COGFA strongly suggests that a new women's facility would be built on or near the grounds of Stateville Correctional Center, with certain facilities/programs (e.g. education) sharing buildings to be constructed. This plan would be extremely detrimental to the current Logan Correctional Center workforce.

The current headcount of IDOC employees working at Logan Correctional Center is 454 staff, categorized as 358 security personnel and 96 non-security personnel.

Logan Correctional Center is understaffed in its operations compared to both budgeted and authorized positions:

	Current Head Count	Budgeted Head Count	Authorized Head Count
Security Personnel	358	413	557
Non-Security Personnel	96	119	131
Total Logan Correctional Facility	454	532	688

Moving forward with a plan to close and move Logan will exacerbate current staffing shortages. If a decision to move Logan is made, one can easily imagine the disruptions in staffing that will occur as staff look to leave Logan for vacancies at other nearby IDOC facilities as opportunities arise -- or look to leave the department altogether once training and experience are gained. It will be extremely difficult to retain current staff and bring in new cadets and personnel with the threat of closure and layoffs looming in the next 5 years.

### **Staff Impact**

Staffing data provided by the department indicates there exist very limited opportunities within reasonable proximity for Logan employees to find employment within the Department of Corrections if the facility is closed and moved.

The department identifies two correctional facilities within close proximity to Logan--Lincoln Correctional Center (next door) and Decatur Correctional Center-- that could serve as institutions to which current staff could reposition in the event of layoffs. The below differentials between current and budgeted headcount at these correctional facilities is a strong indication that there may be extremely limited vacancy opportunities for staff at these facilities:

	Distance	Security Vacancies	Non-Security Vacancies
Decatur Correctional Center	36 miles	13	11
Lincoln Correctional Center	N/A	15	15
Total		28	26

Taylorville and Jacksonville correctional centers are also identified by the department as being within a 60-mile radius of Logan. Like Decatur and Lincoln, the current headcount at these institutions is very near budgeted levels, again indicating there may be very limited positions to which the employees at Logan could move in relative proximity to their current work location in the event of a layoff, also understanding that a 60 mile commute one way is likely untenable for many staff given the stressful work performed.

	Distance	Security Vacancies	Non-Security Vacancies
Jacksonville Correctional Center	59 miles	0	8
Taylorville Correctional Center	57 miles	5	12
Total		5	20

If the facility is closed down and eventually moved to another area of the state, many staff at Logan will only have the option of taking positions that would force them to relocate, causing significant disruption to their lives and their families.

### **Impact on Incarcerated Individuals at Logan**

The incarcerated population at Logan stands at 1,039 individuals. Logan houses over two-thirds of the female population in custody within the IDOC, which was 1,541 as of April 15.

The department claims that moving the women's facility to Will County will establish a regionalized approach, which will enhance programs and improve incarcerated individuals' access to their families and other social supports. Available data from the department does not support these claims.

### ***Regionalization***

In its COGFA filings, the IDOC argues that it is "focused on creating a regionalized approach for the women's facilities to include the centrally located facility in Decatur and possibly a new Logan facility in Crest Hill." According to the IDOC, this regionalized approach will allow all women in the IDOC's custody access to "families, social supports, vocational opportunities, and community resources which helps to further ensure women's success upon release, thus reducing recidivism." There are a number of problems with the assumptions guiding this framework.

First, most of the individuals incarcerated at Logan are not from the northern region of the state. Only 40% of the people incarcerated at Logan have a sentencing county in the greater Chicagoland area or the counties of Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry or Will. From a logistical and demographic perspective, the department does not have a compelling argument to move the women's facility to northern Illinois.

Second, if Logan is closed and another facility is not opened on or near the current Logan campus, there is no suitable location available to provide women from central or southern Illinois with access to “families, social supports, vocational opportunities, and community resources”.

Decatur Correctional Center – the only other correctional center for women in Illinois – is a minimum-security facility. Due to its minimum-security structural elements (i.e., dorm-style, one building), its nursery operations, and other conditions of importance to its current population and programming, Decatur could not house any significant number of the incarcerated population from Logan without grave safety and security concerns. In other words, Decatur is incapable of becoming a regional facility for women from central and southern Illinois, who are medium and maximum-security offenders, and the IDOC’s filings offer no details as to the extensive construction needed and associated cost for that facility to be made suitable for such a purpose.

### ***Access to Family***

According to the union’s calculation, if the women’s correctional institution is moved to Will County, there will be more incarcerated individuals whose families and court writs will have longer commute times compared to the number of individuals whose court writs and family commutes will be shortened.

Being the only facility in the state to house multi-level incarcerated women, the importance of the central location of Logan can be seen in how average statewide travel times are increased if the facility is moved to northern Illinois. If the correctional center were moved to Will County, families residing in 79 counties statewide would have an increased commute for visitations. The average travel time for family visitation and writs would increase significantly, from 2 hours and 8 minutes to 3 hours and 6 minutes. With a location in northern Illinois, travel from 28 counties would exceed 4 hours. Currently there are only two counties from which travel to Logan exceeds four hours. With an incarcerated population that is spread relatively evenly across the state, a central location means all individuals have similar distances for writs, and family commutes for visits are comparable.

### ***Access to Programs***

Logan currently has a robust offering of academic, career training, and other programming available, as identified on the department’s website.

- Academic: Adult Basic Education, Advanced Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, Lake Land College- Associates Degree in Liberal Arts, Cosmetology, North Park University: Masters in Arts in Christian Ministry and Restorative Arts, and Northwestern University: Bachelors of Arts in Social Science
- Career and Technical Education: Construction, Horticulture, Culinary Arts Program
- Industries: Recycle Shop, Helping Paws Program
- Volunteer Services: Religious Services, Women and Family Services
- Other: Westcare Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program, Westcare Dual Diagnosis, Substance Abuse Education Program, Women of Hope Unit, Anger Management, Sexual Assault/Abuse Group, Mental Health Services, Leisure Time

Services, Re-entry Summit, Seeking Safety, Money Smarts, Moving On, Start Now, Aim Higher

Moreover, some 800 women at Logan Correctional Center are diagnosed as seriously mentally ill (SMI). Logan has a well-developed infrastructure of mental health treatment programming with trained and experienced staff that have worked with this population for many years -- making this support system nearly impossible to replicate at a northern Illinois location.

The department forwards a flimsy argument that moving Logan is needed to expand educational programming for the incarcerated women. There are 14 higher education institutions within 90 miles of Logan Correctional Center, including 5 community colleges and 3 public universities. Ample opportunities for collaboration and expansion of programming at Logan using institutions in central Illinois exist if the department had the willingness to seek such partnerships.

### **Co-Correctional Campus**

The CGL report contained in the department's recommendation notes the problematic nature of establishing a co-correctional setting based on the department's prior experience trying to do so. The report notes: *During recent decades, attempts to accommodate the growing female population included adding housing females in coed settings at Dixon Correctional Center and Logan Correctional Center. These efforts were problematic. Managing a male and female prison population in one facility is extremely complex and creates supervision and separation issues. While staff may be responsible for interacting with both male and female population, the type of interaction, the type of programming and the treatment needs of incarcerated males and females is very different.*

When Illinois made the decision to no longer have co-correctional prisons back in 2000, the IDOC Director noted that managing men and women at the same prison "makes a difficult job even more difficult". <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2000/08/25/all-male-prison-changing-to-womens-facility/>

While the COGFA submission does not suggest that the male and female population would actually be in the same facility, there is clearly an intent to share certain facilities located on the same grounds. In line with the concerns raised by CGL, a review of literature on co-correctional facilities indicates a number of drawbacks including illicit offender relationships, supervisory and disciplinary problems, staff security coverage, development of "separate but equal" programming, and staff attitudes. Moreover, the limited research on co-correctional institutions is written with the focus on the impact on incarcerated males. There is very little research on the impact of co-correctional institutions on incarcerated women.

Lastly, co-correctional state prisons are rare. A survey of correctional institution across the county indicates there are only 17 co-correctional state prisons across the United States. The majority of correctional-type coed institutions tend to be medical/mental health treatment centers, federal prisons, private correctional facilities, jails, or labeled community-based facilities.

The limited research and past experience of Illinois strongly indicate that the department's proposed plan to move a women's facility to the Stateville campus would be very ill-advised.

## **Economic Impact**

Undoubtedly the local community will experience a significant economic impact if Logan Correctional Center is relocated out of the area. The department's recommendations minimally address the cost of eliminating 451 jobs from the community, and brush over the impact of removing these quality public sector positions from the local job market.

Of note, the IDOC's own economic impact study wraps up its assessment on the closure of Logan by stating that, "at this time, there is not enough information to be able to make a thorough assessment of the outcomes." Where the report speculates on best-case scenarios, however, those scenarios seem highly improbable. For example, the IDOC's economic impact study notes that the "the magnitude of the impact of the closure of Logan can be reduced if current employees are able to secure positions elsewhere within the system while retaining their existing residences. In this case, the disruption is likely to be short-term." Because the IDOC's own staffing data indicates that there are very limited opportunities within a reasonable proximity for Logan employees to find continued employment with the IDOC, it is highly unlikely that impacted employees will be able to "secure positions elsewhere within the system while retaining their existing residences."

Moreover, the economic impact study fails to mention the recent economic challenges that Logan County has experienced over the last several years, including the closure of Lincoln College and Lincoln Christian University. To move the women's correctional facility out of Logan County only intensifies local concern regarding the economic impact on the community.

## **Conclusion**

In sum, there is no sound basis for relocating the state's only medium/maximum correctional center for incarcerated women and considerable potential for harm. The current location offers the potential for a new facility that can maintain continuity of programming, mental health treatment, family connections, and experienced staff. That is the path for which the department should develop an actual plan that can be fully and effectively implemented.

5-20-2024

To: The Committee of  
Facility Closing

My name is Alicia Abraham #B07090  
who reside at Logan Correctional Center Facility.

I am sixty-three years of age and I live  
on ~~at~~ Cottage - six North - ten. Which I was  
sentence to Natural Life without parole and aggravated  
battery to a child <sup>at</sup> with fifty percent with no relief  
whatsoever. I have served thirty-seven years already  
as of now.

Since I have been locked up in prison. I have  
worked many job assignments <sup>such as: industry, laundry, porter, house girl, janitor</sup> as a model inmate  
and school throughout my prison time. My health is not the best  
anymore I have a condition called ~~static~~ Sciatic nerve,  
arthritis in the lower back; Osteoporosis and knee  
problems. I now walk with a walker and I am  
living among people who are ~~moderately~~ put on this  
housing unit that are not disabled, elderly, nor medical  
because there is no room for them.

Housing Unit ten and nine are shut down so that  
is why we have on house six aggressive women straight  
from seg they are kept separate over here because there is  
no room to put them. (We) as elderly, disabled and medically  
are not safe when C/O's allow other inmates from the

South wing and other housing unit to do a three- or seven staff to do their job so to say that I am asking all offenders produced since being in IDOC Care and long timers and inmates with short out dates or who have done clemency or that are in Courts First time offender third time offenders should all be able to see the parole board do to the closing of Logan do to the building falling apart, cracking, down.

The issues of the Logan Prison is the water is toxic, no exhaust fans to bring the heat out and there is no air out at all. The floor sweat in the summer. In the winter when the heat is ~~on~~ <sup>on</sup> it put off a toxic smell that is unbearable to breath.

The water is leaking all on the bathroom floor, there is black mold in the walls, the roof is caving in the hallway on the north side by the bathroom.

None of the Staff have Compassion for us. There is not enough food to feed us all and we are receiving baby proportion, which they can not cloth us, they can not provide us with the necessity and they can not keep commissary stocked up for us.

We are neglected by it being Women's Commissary do not accommodate us as being real women's Nor, provide us with the food we lack from Commissary.



Our health care does not accommodate our needs.

We do not get adequate care as being Women's  
We need I believe that if you as this Committee  
Would consider making one (big) mass releases,  
Let the parole board be the judge of recommendation  
of whom should be released from your Committee  
approval.

This will help the prison population to  
reducks so they can rebuild a women's prison,  
that will be acceptable for confinement.

Thank you for your time  
in this matter.

God Bless  
You  
All.

Logan Correctional Center  
P. O. Box 1000  
Lincoln, IL 62656

Alicia Abraham #B07090  
Cottage 6-N-10

To The Committee of the Closing of the Facility:

This is in regards to Terms and Conditions of My Sentence and Stay So Far and Future Incarceration Length and progress.

Will Start by Intellectual explanation of a Short-term Stay at D. White House a due process of a Lengthy Harassment Minor Change Leads to 17 years Harder Me Back for a Petty Crime & Sentence running consecutive keeping Me enclosed in a prison full of Intra-racial Bacial - Underlining the Growth of Hate and Heated Temperance in an over populated Area is more than Difficult to Understand and Help with lifting in the impacted, enclosed Area.

Please take your time and Set in Motion any and all Possible Solutions to Better Address My Situation and Sentence here, to Righten the Weight of My Sentence here at Logan / Lincoln all.

Thank you for your <sup>direct</sup> Attention in all matters

Sincerely  
Shirley

Housing  
Conditions



H-6-17

R-81664

05-19-24

To The Committee of Closing of the Facility:

This in regards to terms and conditions of my  
Sentence Modification and my stay for  
the aggression and pressure of  
over population and lack of housing  
units to properly segregate, strong  
vests underlying the race and racial  
tension and actions hurting the  
growth of hate and hatred  
passion underlying temperance  
is our enclosed plea.  
The impact of larger numbers  
crimates is unbearable, and a  
sentence to complete under  
circumstances rendered is un-  
ruly and un-just.

Thank You

James  
J. [Signature]

5/25/24

To: Commission ON Government  
Forecasting And Accountability  
ATTN: Facility Closure

I'm writing to let you know about some of the thing down here that are really bad, like the water it's so bad that it's making alot of the inmate's very sick, And now they are turning down alot of inmates who have medical rits, and are not giving us our right Medication.

The donation that do come threw, they take out all the name brand stuff and keep them, Some of us inmates have seen them putting them in their cars to take home.

I've been leted up, going on 18 years now, And that's out of a 26 year sentence, I had put in for Decatur, but I can't go because of my case, So I have 7 years left, And would like to know if I am able to go under anyone of the turnmens that would put me out of here and home.

Please let me know.

Brenda Weeks

R86039 Unit 6/N-3-1

Thank You  
Brenda Weeks



May 31, 2024

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability  
ATTN: Facility Closure  
802 Stratton Building  
Springfield, IL 62706  
Submitted via email to [facilityclosure@ilga.gov](mailto:facilityclosure@ilga.gov)

**Re: Public Comment on the Closure of Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers**

Dear Members of the Commission,

I am writing on behalf of the [Illinois Prison Project](#) (IPP), a legal nonprofit organization that provides direct representation to incarcerated people and fights for criminal legal reform in Illinois to reduce mass incarceration. IPP strongly supports the permanent closure of Stateville Correctional Center and Logan Correctional Center and is firmly opposed to the proposed rebuilding of these facilities. Permanently closing these facilities is pivotal for advancing criminal legal reform in Illinois and promoting a more humane and effective approach to public safety. Instead of rebuilding Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers, we urge Illinois to use existing tools to reduce the prison population to pandemic-levels, eliminating the need for Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers' prison beds and allowing an estimated \$900 million to be redirected back into communities.

**Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers must be closed.**

Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers are notorious for their outdated and unsafe conditions, which are not conducive to rehabilitation or humane treatment. Stateville Correctional Center, built in 1925, has been described as "decrepit, unsafe, and inhumane" by watchdog groups and advocates for prison reform. A significant factor in this characterization is the prison's antiquated infrastructure, which includes crumbling buildings, inadequate heating, and plumbing issues. These conditions have led to lawsuits and persistent calls for substantial reforms or closure ([WTTW News](#)) ([Yahoo](#)).

Similarly, Logan Correctional Center, originally opened in the 1870s as an asylum, has been found to be "inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable for any population" ([CGL](#)). The aging facilities, including coal-fired power systems and molding housing units, have created a hazardous environment for both incarcerated individuals and staff. The Illinois Department of

Ph. (incarcerated line only): (312)767-5773

Ph. (non-incarcerated line only) (312)324-4463 | fax: (773)389-3344 | [illinoisprisonproject.org](http://illinoisprisonproject.org)

53 West Jackson Blvd, Suite 452, Chicago, IL 60604

Corrections' own commissioned analysis recommended finding a more suitable location for housing incarcerated individuals due to these severe deficiencies ([Yahoo](#)) ([Capitol Fax](#)). Closing these facilities is a necessary step to ensure that we do not continue to subject incarcerated people to inhumane living conditions that fail to meet basic standards of decency and safety.

## **Rebuilding Stateville and Logan Correctional Center would harm communities.**

Rebuilding prisons continues to support a system that has consistently failed to address the root causes of criminal behavior. It prioritizes incarceration, which has been shown to have limited effectiveness in deterring crime and often exacerbates issues such as recidivism and community disintegration ([JSTOR Daily](#)). Instead of creating more spaces to incarcerate individuals, Illinois should redirect these resources towards initiatives that provide long-term solutions.

The focus should be on creating a justice system that prioritizes rehabilitation and humane treatment. Evidence-based rehabilitation programs, including education, vocational training, mental health services, and substance abuse treatment, are far more effective in reducing recidivism and helping individuals reintegrate into society. By investing in these programs, Illinois can build a system that truly promotes public safety and supports the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated individuals.

Investing in community-based support systems such as education, vocational training, mental health services, and transitional housing can address the root causes of crime and reduce recidivism rates. [Study](#) after [study](#) consistently shows that incarceration [increases recidivism](#) and fails to make [communities](#) safer. By shifting our focus from punishment to rehabilitation, we can build a more just and effective criminal legal system that supports individuals in their reintegration into society.

Closing these outdated prisons presents an opportunity to repurpose the land for more beneficial uses, such as affordable housing, parks, and community centers. These projects can revitalize local neighborhoods, creating environments that support community well-being and reduce the factors that contribute to crime. For example:

- Affordable housing helps reduce homelessness and economic instability, which are significant factors contributing to crime.
- Parks and recreational facilities offer safe spaces for physical activity, social interaction, and community events, which foster social cohesion and deter crime.
- Community centers and educational facilities provide resources for education, vocational training, and recreational activities, which can reduce crime by addressing its root causes.

Repurposing these prison sites can help stimulate local economies by creating jobs, increasing property values, and attracting businesses. Additionally, addressing the root causes of crime through education, stable housing, and community resources can reduce the likelihood of criminal behavior.

Moreover, the cost of rebuilding these facilities, estimated at \$900 million, is an exorbitant expense that Illinois cannot afford. Instead, these funds could be redirected towards more effective and humane alternatives to incarceration, such as restorative justice programs, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and community-based initiatives. Shifting resources away from incarceration and towards prevention and rehabilitation will provide better outcomes for individuals and communities, as well as significant cost savings for everyone in Illinois. By closing and not rebuilding Stateville and Logan, Illinois taxpayers could save at least \$144 million annually.

### **Illinois can immediately and safely reduce its prison population, eliminating the need for Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers.**

Illinois has the tools necessary to significantly reduce its prison population without compromising public safety, which are described in more detail below. Together, Stateville and Logan have a current combined population of 2,997. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Illinois used clemency, sentencing credits, and early release programs for elderly and medically vulnerable individuals to successfully reduce the prison population to 26,193 from 38,592, a reduction of more than 12,000 people. These measures demonstrated that it is possible to decrease the prison population while maintaining public safety. As the COVID-19 pandemic has waned, we have stopped using these release mechanisms robustly, and our prison population has steadily increased, reaching more than 29,000 at the end of 2023. By using existing decarceration measures and embracing new ones, Illinois can reduce its prison population back to pandemic levels. That reduction would eliminate the need for prison beds at Stateville or Logan, and would make any rebuilding of those facilities unnecessary.

**Medical Release:** The Medical Release Program in Illinois, also known as the Joe Coleman Act, allows for the early release of incarcerated individuals who are suffering from terminal illnesses or severe medical incapacitation. This program aims to provide humane treatment for those who are unable to care for themselves due to medical conditions and to reduce the burden on the prison healthcare system.

Enacted on January 1, 2022, the Joe Coleman Act allows eligible individuals to apply for early release based on medical conditions such as terminal illness or severe, permanent medical incapacitation. To qualify, an incarcerated individual must have a diagnosable medical condition



that severely limits their ability to perform daily activities or is expected to cause death within 18 months ([Illinois Prisoner Review Board](#)) ([Illinois Department of Public Health](#)).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Medical Release Program was utilized more frequently to alleviate the strain on prison healthcare facilities and reduce the risk of virus transmission among the prison population. The pandemic highlighted the vulnerabilities of incarcerated individuals, especially those with severe health conditions, prompting a more proactive use of medical release to protect these individuals and manage healthcare resources more effectively ([FDA](#)) ([Effective Health Care](#)).

Currently, the Medical Release Program continues to operate under the guidelines established by the Joe Coleman Act. The Illinois Prisoner Review Board reviews applications and conducts medical evaluations to determine eligibility. The process includes input from medical professionals and considers various factors such as the incarcerated person's prognosis, the cost of continued incarceration, and the potential danger to public safety if released. The aim is to balance humanitarian considerations with public safety concerns ([Illinois Prisoner Review Board](#)) ([Illinois Department of Public Health](#)).

By implementing this program more robustly, Illinois can significantly reduce the number of inmates in its correctional facilities. Currently, there are approximately 6,500 individuals aged 50 and older in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) who are potentially eligible for medical release. By granting medical release to those who qualify, Illinois can alleviate overcrowding in prisons, reducing the strain on facilities and the healthcare system.

The financial burden of incarcerating individuals with severe medical conditions is substantial. Providing medical care in a prison setting is often more expensive than in community settings. By utilizing the Joe Coleman Act, Illinois can redirect funds from the costly provision of prison healthcare to more effective and humane community-based medical care. This reallocation of resources can enhance the quality of care for released individuals and free up state funds for other critical areas, such as education, housing, and mental health services.

To address concerns that releasing incarcerated individuals might endanger public safety, the Joe Coleman Act includes rigorous eligibility criteria and thorough review processes to mitigate such risks. The Illinois Prisoner Review Board, in collaboration with medical professionals, evaluates each case to ensure that only those who pose minimal risk to society are granted release. By focusing on the humanitarian aspects of release and ensuring stringent review protocols, Illinois can maintain public safety while reducing the prison population.

Releasing medically incapacitated individuals aligns with the principles of rehabilitation and humane treatment. Many of these individuals are no longer capable of reoffending due to their medical conditions. Providing them with the opportunity to spend their remaining time in a more



supportive and less restrictive environment can aid in their reintegration into society. This approach fosters a more rehabilitative justice system that prioritizes the dignity and well-being of individuals.

The proactive use of the Medical Release Program during the COVID-19 pandemic serves as a case study for its potential impact. By facilitating the early release of vulnerable individuals, Illinois successfully reduced the risk of virus transmission within prisons and managed healthcare resources more effectively. This experience underscores the program's potential to enhance public health and safety under normal circumstances as well.

The Joe Coleman Act offers a strategic pathway for Illinois to reduce its prison population while simultaneously enhancing public safety. By leveraging this Act, the state can provide compassionate release to those who are medically incapacitated, thus optimizing resources and focusing on rehabilitative and preventive measures that benefit both the individuals and the broader community.

**Executive Clemency:** Executive clemency in Illinois is a power vested in the Governor to pardon individuals, commute sentences, and grant expungements. This mechanism is used to show mercy, correct judicial errors, or address humanitarian concerns. Clemency can take various forms, including full pardons, commutations of sentences, and conditional pardons with or without the restoration of certain rights.

The authority for executive clemency in Illinois is embedded in the state constitution, granting the Governor broad powers to offer relief to convicted individuals. Historically, the clemency process has been a vital tool for addressing injustices within the criminal legal system, particularly after the state abolished discretionary parole in 1978, which led to a significant increase in the prison population ([Illinois Prisoner Review Board](#)) ([Restore Justice Foundation](#)).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor J.B. Pritzker utilized executive clemency more extensively to mitigate the risk of virus transmission in crowded prisons. In 2020 alone, he granted 67 sentence commutations, many of which aimed to reduce the prison population and protect vulnerable individuals from the virus. This period saw a notable increase in clemency applications as families and advocates sought to secure the release of incarcerated people who were at-risk ([A Bridge Forward](#)) ([Restore Justice Foundation](#)).

Governors in other states have also used their executive clemency powers to safely reduce their prison populations, for example:

- **California:** Governor Gavin Newsom has also used clemency as a tool for criminal legal reform. During the pandemic, he granted clemency to several hundred incarcerated people, focusing on those at high risk from COVID-19 and individuals who had shown

significant rehabilitation. His clemency decisions have been part of broader efforts to reduce the state's prison population and address systemic issues within the criminal legal system.

- **Oklahoma:** Republican Governor Kevin Stitt has been proactive in using executive clemency as part of broader criminal legal reforms. In January 2020, he signed 774 commutations, 290 pardons, and 101 paroles in a single day, marking a significant move towards reducing the state's prison population. This large-scale use of clemency reflects Oklahoma's efforts to address over-incarceration and promote rehabilitation ([Collateral Consequences Resource Center](#)).
- **Oregon:** Governor Kate Brown significantly expanded the use of clemency during her tenure, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. From March 2020 to November 2021, she granted 35 pardons and 985 conditional commutations. Her approach included reviewing cases of people vulnerable to COVID-19 and those nearing the end of their sentences, as well as re-evaluating sentences of individuals convicted as juveniles ([Collateral Consequences Resource Center](#)).

Currently, Governor Pritzker continues to exercise clemency, albeit at a much slower rate compared to the pandemic. In 2023, he granted 28 pardons and 15 sentence commutations. The process remains complex and often lengthy, with many applications awaiting review. ([Illinois Prisoner Review Board](#)) ([A Bridge Forward](#)).

**Repeal Truth-in-Sentence:** Illinois should also repeal the state's truth-in-sentencing law. This law, which mandates that individuals convicted of certain crimes serve a high percentage of their sentences without the possibility of parole or early release, undermines principles of justice, rehabilitation, and fiscal responsibility. Repealing this law is essential for creating a fairer, more effective criminal justice system in Illinois.

The truth-in-sentencing law imposes rigid sentencing requirements that do not account for the unique circumstances of each case or the potential for individual rehabilitation. By mandating that individuals serve most or all of their sentences, this law removes the possibility for earned good behavior credits, parole, or other forms of early release. This one-size-fits-all approach to sentencing does not reflect the values of justice and equity, leading to disproportionately harsh penalties that fail to consider the potential for personal growth and change.

Repealing the truth-in-sentencing law can significantly reduce the prison population in Illinois. The current law contributes to prison overcrowding by requiring extended periods of incarceration, even for individuals who have demonstrated good behavior and rehabilitation. By allowing for parole and early release, Illinois can alleviate the burden on its correctional

facilities, reduce overcrowding, and lower the costs associated with maintaining a large prison population.

The truth-in-sentencing law hinders the rehabilitation and reintegration of incarcerated individuals. Without the possibility of parole or early release, individuals have less incentive to engage in rehabilitative programs and demonstrate good behavior. Repealing this law would restore the opportunity for incarcerated individuals to earn early release through positive actions and participation in educational, vocational, and therapeutic programs. This change would support their successful reintegration into society and reduce recidivism rates.

Other states that have moved away from strict truth-in-sentencing laws have seen positive outcomes, including reduced prison populations and improved rehabilitation efforts ([National Academies Press](#)). For example, states like California and New York have implemented reforms that emphasize rehabilitation and provide pathways to early release, leading to more humane and effective criminal justice systems.

**General Retroactivity:** Illinois should also enact legislation that permits the retroactive application of any newly enacted or amended criminal laws. Such a measure is vital for ensuring justice and equity within our legal system. When the law in effect at the time of an individual's prosecution has changed in a way that would have resulted in no conviction or a lesser sentence, it is imperative that those affected by the outdated law be given the opportunity to benefit from the new, more just provisions.

Justice must be consistent, and individuals should not continue to suffer the consequences of laws that society has deemed unjust or outdated. Retroactive application of new laws ensures that individuals are not unfairly penalized under statutes that no longer reflect the values and standards of contemporary society. Implementing retroactive application can significantly reduce the prison population by allowing individuals who would not be convicted under current laws to have their sentences reconsidered or dismissed. This not only alleviates overcrowding but also reduces the financial burden on the state.

Moreover, individuals affected by outdated laws often face prolonged incarceration, which can hinder their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Allowing retroactive application supports the principle of rehabilitation by recognizing the potential for change and the importance of second chances.

Numerous states have successfully implemented retroactive application of new criminal laws, resulting in positive outcomes. For example, California has made several significant changes to its criminal laws, some of which apply retroactively. These changes are part of broader criminal legal reforms aimed at reducing mass incarceration, addressing racial disparities, and promoting rehabilitation. Here are some notable recent changes in California:

- **AB 600 (2023) — General Retroactivity:** AB 600 gives judges the discretion to modify a sentence for any person when the applicable sentencing laws at the time of original sentencing are subsequently changed by new statutory authority or case law. The law has been used by judges throughout California to recall sentences that would be different if imposed today.
- **SB 1437 (2018) - Felony Murder Reform:** Significantly reformed the felony murder rule in California. Under the old rule, individuals could be convicted of murder if they were involved in a felony that resulted in a death, even if they did not directly cause the death or intend for it to happen. The law also created a process for individuals convicted under the old felony murder rule to petition for resentencing. This change applies retroactively, allowing many individuals to have their cases reviewed and potentially be released or have their sentences reduced.
- **Proposition 57 (2016) - Parole and Juvenile Justice Reform:** Proposition 57 introduced several reforms aimed at reducing the state's prison population. Key provisions include: (1) Allowing people convicted of non-violent offenses to be considered for parole after serving the primary term for their offense, and (2) giving judges, rather than prosecutors, the authority to decide whether juveniles should be tried as adults. This proposition is applied retroactively, enabling many inmates to become eligible for parole earlier than under previous rules.
- **SB 620 (2017) - Discretion in Firearm Enhancements:** Gives judges the discretion to strike firearm enhancements in sentencing, which previously carried mandatory additional years in prison. The law applies retroactively, allowing individuals sentenced with firearm enhancements to petition for resentencing.
- **AB 1308 (2017) - Youth Offender Parole Hearings:** Extends youth offender parole hearings to individuals who committed their crimes when they were 25 years old or younger. Previously, these hearings were available only to those who committed their crimes at age 23 or younger. This change applies retroactively, allowing more inmates to be considered for parole under the youth offender guidelines.

**Youthful Parole Eligibility:** The Governor should use his executive clemency powers to grant commutations to individuals serving sentences under laws that have changed since their conviction and sentencing. This action is particularly crucial for the approximately 4,000 individuals in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) who were under the age of 21 at the time of their offense and would be eligible for youthful parole under current laws.

Granting executive clemency to those sentenced under outdated laws ensures that justice is applied consistently and fairly. Many individuals were sentenced when they were under 21 years old, and their sentences do not reflect current understandings of youth development and criminal justice. Recognizing the potential for growth and rehabilitation, it is imperative to allow these individuals the opportunity to benefit from modern, more just legal standards.

Young people are inherently capable of change. The brain continues to develop into the mid-20s, and youthful offenders often mature and rehabilitate over time. By granting clemency and making these individuals eligible for parole, we acknowledge their capacity for transformation and support their potential reintegration into society as responsible citizens.

Commuting sentences and making youthful offenders eligible for parole can significantly reduce the prison population. Many individuals incarcerated under outdated laws would no longer face such harsh sentences today. By adjusting their sentences, the state can alleviate overcrowding in prisons, reducing the financial burden on Illinois' correctional system and reallocating resources to more effective rehabilitation and reentry programs.

The opportunity for parole incentivizes positive behavior and participation in rehabilitative programs. Commuting sentences and allowing for parole eligibility aligns with the principles of rehabilitation, offering individuals a second chance to prove their readiness to rejoin society. Comprehensive support services, including education, job training, and mental health resources, are essential to ensure their successful reintegration.

**Resentencing:** Resentencing refers to the legal process where an individual's original sentence is reviewed and potentially modified. This can occur due to new evidence, changes in circumstances or the law, or considerations of fairness and proportionality. Resentencing aims to correct judicial errors, adjust to new legal or social standards (e.g., increased awareness of postpartum psychosis), or address changes in the circumstances of the incarcerated individual.

In Illinois, resentencing has been used sporadically, primarily driven by legislative changes or court rulings that necessitate a review of past sentences. However, Illinois could implement a robust program that enables judges to regularly review and modify sentences, for example, after the incarcerated person has served a significant number of years of their sentence. This includes looking at cases where the original sentencing may have been overly harsh or not in line with current standards of justice. Illinois could also utilize data and analytics to identify trends and disparities in sentencing to help address systemic issues and ensure that resentencing efforts are targeted and effective. By adopting these measures, Illinois would create a more balanced and equitable legal system, reduce prison overcrowding, and support the rehabilitation efforts of incarcerated people.

**Earned Discretionary Sentencing Credit:** The Earned Discretionary Sentencing Credit (EDSC) allows the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) to award sentence credits to eligible individuals as an incentive for good behavior and participation in rehabilitative programs. Eligible individuals can receive up to 180 days of credit for sentences under five years, and up to 365 days for longer sentences. The goal is to encourage positive behavior and facilitate a quicker reintegration into society.

The concept of discretionary sentencing credits in Illinois dates back several decades. The current form, EDSC, was enacted through legislative changes that took effect in January 2018. This reform aimed to expand the categories of individuals eligible for sentencing credits, emphasizing the importance of good behavior and rehabilitation over merely serving time ([John Howard Association of Illinois](#)).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the IDOC utilized EDSC more extensively to reduce the prison population and mitigate the spread of the virus. From March 2020, over 3,000 people were released early through the application of earned discretionary credits. This was part of a broader strategy to manage the health crisis within correctional facilities by decreasing population density and promoting safer conditions (IDOC) ([John Howard Association of Illinois](#)).

As of now, EDSC continues to be an important tool within the Illinois correctional system. The IDOC maintains the discretion to award these credits based on a variety of factors, including good behavior and participation in educational and rehabilitative programs. However, there are ongoing discussions and calls for the IDOC to clarify and standardize the criteria and processes for awarding these credits to ensure transparency and fairness ([IL Sentencing Advisory](#)) (IDOC). Illinois' use of EDSC in 2023 declined 30% as compared to 2022, and 40% as compared to 2021. The Illinois Department of Corrections should continue to leverage the EDSC program to the greatest extent possible to reduce its prison population.

**Electronic Detention:** The Electronic Detention (ED) program in Illinois allows certain people to serve part of their prison sentence at home under strict monitoring conditions. Participants typically wear ankle monitors and have their movements restricted and tracked to ensure compliance with the terms of their detention. This program aims to reduce prison overcrowding, cut costs, and provide a less restrictive environment for eligible individuals while still ensuring public safety.

The concept of ED has evolved over the years, with significant reforms implemented through the Illinois Safety, Accountability, Fairness and Equity-Today (SAFE-T) Act, signed into law by Governor J.B. Pritzker on January 22, 2021. The SAFE-T Act included provisions to expand the use of electronic monitoring as an alternative to traditional incarceration, aiming to improve the efficiency of the criminal legal system and enhance rehabilitative opportunities for incarcerated people (ICJIA, 2021).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of ED increased significantly as part of the broader strategy to mitigate the spread of the virus within correctional facilities. The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) utilized electronic monitoring to safely reduce the prison population and limit the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks. This move was critical in maintaining health and safety standards within the prisons, providing a controlled environment for people to serve their sentences while minimizing exposure to the virus.

The ED program should continue to serve as a crucial mechanism for reducing the prison population while maintaining public safety and supporting the rehabilitation of incarcerated people. The program currently focuses on individuals who meet specific criteria, such as those convicted of lower-level offenses or people nearing the end of their sentences. There are about 200 people in IDOC custody who are currently eligible for release under the program's current criteria. However, the criteria should be expanded to cover more offenses and provide greater eligibility without jeopardizing public safety.

### **Permanently Closing Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers is a step towards reducing racial inequity in our criminal legal system.**

Continuing to invest in a punitive system that disproportionately affects marginalized communities is ethically and morally indefensible. Black individuals in Illinois are incarcerated at a rate more than seven times higher than white individuals, despite constituting only 14% of the state's population, they represent about 56% of the prison population. Furthermore, Black youth are detained at nearly five times the rate of their white counterparts; in 2017, they accounted for 57% of juvenile detentions while representing just 17% of the youth population. Hispanic individuals also face significant disparities, comprising around 17% of the state's population but approximately 24% of the prison population ([Prison Policy Initiative](#)). Through measures that continue to reduce that prison population and the permanent closure of Stateville and Logan, Illinois' leaders can reject a system that perpetuates inequality and fails to deliver true justice, aligning with our state's values of fairness, rehabilitation, and respect for human rights.

In conclusion, closing Stateville and Logan Correctional Centers and opposing their reconstruction is a critical step towards a more equitable and effective legal system. It is an opportunity to invest in alternatives that truly promote public safety and community well-being. We urge you to consider the long-term benefits of this approach and to make a decision that reflects Illinois' commitment to justice and human dignity.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Soble".

Jennifer Soble  
Executive Director  
Illinois Prison Project

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marshan Allen".

Marshan Allen  
Director of Policy & Communications  
Illinois Prison Project



5/27/24

TO The State of Illinois;  
(of whom it may concern)

I'm Writing to talk about  
the rebuilding process of Illinois,  
Department of Corrections, Logan facility.  
I am one opposed to the move  
to Joliet and having to share  
our Schools and Libraries with  
~~the~~ men. I would like our facility  
to still have access to grass  
and plants on our outside patio space.  
Still have jobs not overran by  
men, or have to worry about  
being housed with men that  
are rapist and Murderers.  
Please take into consideration we  
are humans and we do  
have essential needs as well  
as want to be treated as  
such. Thank You for reading  
my letter, Sincerely Lynda Castillo  
Lynda Castillo #457712

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Heather Lamie. I currently reside at Logan Correctional facility. I am writing in opposition to the facility closing. I have been here since 2014. During my time in County, I quickly realized how important being able to be outside was for mental health. Not only do we get to walk outside here at Logan but we have a lot of green space, trees, and flowers. I for one don't know how I would manage in a concrete world. Also many of us, in fact most of us, are from central IL. Moving locations farther north would make it very difficult for visits. My in-person visits boost my mental and physical health. Lastly, by moving locations the staff that has been trained to work with our population wouldn't be able to follow. The staff here are an important part for our population's safety and well being. It has taken a lot of time and money to train the staff on how to properly guide our population. Starting over seems dangerous and daunting. Thank you for your careful consideration.

Heather Lamie

May 30, 24

Please reconsider the closure of  
the Logan facility - It is a good  
place for women inmates to not be  
overcrowded and access to work in  
gardens + be out in nature -

I'm an opponent of NOT  
closing this

Sincerely  
Joanne Rollin



To, whom it may concern,

My name is Joyce McBee #B5 and I am writing in regards of Logan closed down. First and foremost, I want to say that I appreciate you guys wanting to know our thoughts, it really means a lot to us. Anyways my thoughts on this is anything like Dwight or here at Co having everything inside one building is depressing. It gives you the terrible of being in a county jail. Being able to go to school, Health Care, commissary, being able to feel fresh air and sun on my skin. I do not want to do anything with the men because I know that the men will take over and the ~~men~~ will be short changed. It is my hope that you consider fixing Dwight correctional center or rebuild Logan Correctional Center for the women. Also if you push for House 5219 to go into retro active effect, the men will go down and you will be able to rebuild the women.

Anyways Thank you for taking time out to read this. Please have a great day.

Sincerely,  
Joyce McGee  
#R85454

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Name: Craig Linne  
Facility Being Closed: Logan Correctional Center  
My Position: Opponent

I have attempted to formulate my written statement several times now, and each time I begin, I get frustrated the more I try to understand the "logic" behind Governor Pritzker and the Departments rationale for wanting to move Logan Correctional Center from its centrally located position in Lincoln, IL to the proposed site in northern Illinois.

My name is Craig. I am 30 years old and have worked in the Department of Corrections for 9 years. I am a Springfield/Central Illinois resident, born and raised. I married my husband in November of 2020. My interests include working on house projects, landscaping, bike rides, video games, cars and motorsports, going to concerts, movies, and hanging out with friends. I also enjoy being active in my Union.

In my 9 years with the department, I have seen so many changes it's hard to keep track. For better or worse, I have seen staff come and go, individuals in custody come and go, administrators come and go, executive staff come and go, policies change, and culture change. There are some things, however, I have noticed that have never changed. These are the departments willful neglect when it comes to maintenance and repair, and the Departments refusal to allow for meaningful input from its employees, contracted employees, stakeholders and individuals in custody when making rule changes, policy changes, culture changes, procedural changes- with total disregard for whom these changes affect. In fact, regarding the proposed plan to close and relocate Logan Correctional Center from Lincoln to Crest Hill, I have yet to find any fact, statistic or logical reason supporting the decision to move.

Below are some interesting statistics, facts, and data

Drive time and Distance

Time and distance are important for two main reasons. The time it takes to transport individuals in custody to court writs, and the time it takes for friends and families to visit their loved ones in custody. Currently, there are 2 counties in Illinois that have a drive time of 4 hours or more to reach Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln. Should the facility be moved from its current Location to that of the proposed site in Crest Hill, 28 counties will have a drive time that is 4, 5, nearly 6 hours depending on traffic and weather conditions. (Time and distance from county seat to Logan CC in Lincoln, IL and then time and distance from county seat to the proposed site to Crest Hill, IL)

County	County Seat	Drive Time and Mileage to Logan Correctional Cener		Drivetime and Mileage to Stateville Correctional Center	
Adams	Quincy	2 Hours, 10 Minutes	140 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 15 Minutes</u>	<u>278 Miles</u>
Alexander	Cairo	4 Hours, 3 Minutes	267 Miles	<u>5 Hours, 36 Minutes</u>	<u>356 Miles</u>
Bond	Greenville	1 Hour, 40 Minutes	99.3 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 45 Minutes</u>	<u>237 Miles</u>
Boone	Belvidere	2 Hours, 37 Minutes	174 Miles	1 Hour, 30 Minutes	85.8 Miles
Brown	Mount Sterling	1 Hour, 43 Minutes	90.7 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 37 Minutes</u>	<u>216 Miles</u>
Bureau	Princeton	1 Hour, 44 Minutes	99.5 Miles	1 Hour, 24 Minutes	83.6 Miles
Calhoun	Hardin	1 Hour, 57 Minutes	122 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 3 Minutes</u>	<u>260 Miles</u>
Carroll	Mount Carroll	2 Hours, 45 Minutes	158 Miles	2 Hours, 30 Minutes	132 Miles
Cass	Virginia	1 Hour, 5 Minutes	58.7 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 10 Minutes</u>	<u>196 Miles</u>
Champaign	Urbana	1 Hour, 21 Minutes	87.5 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 15 Minutes</u>	<u>117 Miles</u>
Christian	Taylorville	54 Minutes	52.8 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 59 Minutes</u>	<u>190 Miles</u>
Clark	Marshall	2 Hours, 29 Minutes	126 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 29 Minutes</u>	<u>199 Miles</u>
Clay	Louisville	2 Hours, 29 Minutes	134 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 42 Minutes</u>	<u>220 Miles</u>
Clinton	Carlyle	2 Hours, 7 Minutes	120 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 11 Minutes</u>	<u>258 Miles</u>
Coles	Charleston	1 Hour, 49 Minutes	95.5 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 55 Minutes</u>	<u>170 Miles</u>
Cook	Chicago	2 Hours, 52 Minutes	174 Miles	1 Hour, 17 Minutes	37.6 Miles
Crawford	Robinson	2 Hours, 56 Minutes	152 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 4 Minutes</u>	<u>225 Miles</u>
Cumberland	Toledo	2 Hours, 3 Minutes	107 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 9 Minutes</u>	<u>184 Miles</u>
Dekalb	Sycamore	2 Hours, 27 Minutes	166 Miles	1 Hour, 11 Minutes	63.7 Miles
Dewitt	Clinton	35 Minutes	26.8 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 1 Minute</u>	<u>127 Miles</u>
Douglas	Tuscola	1 Hour, 30 Minutes	74.2 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 32 Minutes</u>	<u>143 Miles</u>
DuPage	Wheaton	2 Hours, 34 Minutes	165 Miles	42 Minutes	28.1 Miles
Edgar	Paris	2 Hours, 16 Minutes	111 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 13 Minutes</u>	<u>184 Miles</u>
Edwards	Albion	3 Hours, 16 Minutes	172 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 25 Minutes</u>	<u>253 Miles</u>
Effingham	Effingham	2 Hours	109 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 14 Minutes</u>	<u>195 Miles</u>
Fayette	Vandalia	1 Hour, 46 Minutes	100 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 37 Minutes</u>	<u>220 Miles</u>
Ford	Paxton	1 Hour, 30 Minutes	84.9 Miles	<u>1 Hour, 46 Minutes</u>	<u>91.6 Miles</u>
Franklin	Benton	2 Hours, 58 Minutes	195 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 33 Miles</u>	<u>284 Miles</u>
Fulton	Lewistown	1 Hour, 4 Minutes	60.2 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 45 Minutes</u>	<u>171 Miles</u>
Gallatin	Shawneetown	3 Hours, 51 Minutes	240 Miles	<u>5 Hours, 15 Minutes</u>	<u>296 Miles</u>
Greene	Carrollton	1 Hour, 35 Minutes	98.3 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 41 Minutes</u>	<u>236 Miles</u>
Grundy	Morris	1 Hour, 44 Minutes	116 Miles	37 Minutes	28.3 Miles
Hamilton	McLeansboro	3 Hours, 7 Minutes	203 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 42 Minutes</u>	<u>292 Miles</u>
Hancock	Carthage	2 Hours, 2 Minutes	112 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 47 Minutes</u>	<u>238 Miles</u>
Hardin	Elizabethtown	4 Hours, 14 Minutes	257 Miles	<u>5 Hours, 39 Minutes</u>	<u>319 Miles</u>
Henderson	Oquawka	1 Hour 58 Minutes	129 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 6 Minutes</u>	<u>195 Miles</u>
Henry	Cambridge	1 Hour 49 Minutes	113 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 8 Minutes</u>	<u>129 Miles</u>

Iroquois	Watseka	2 Hours, 1 Minute	119 Miles	<u>1 Hout, 35 Minutes</u>	<u>75.8 Miles</u>
Jackson	Murphysboro	3 Hours, 4 Minutes	191 Miles	<u>5 Hours, 14 Minutes</u>	<u>318 Miles</u>
Jasper	Newton	2 Hours, 25 Minutes	128 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 34 Minutes</u>	<u>209 Miles</u>
Jefferson	Mount Vernon	2 Hours, 41 Minutes	173 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 15 Minutes</u>	<u>263 Miles</u>
Jersey	Jerseyville	1 Hour, 48 Minutes	109 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 54 Minutes</u>	<u>247 Miles</u>
Jo Daviess	Galena	3 Hours, 29 Minutes	209 Miles	3 Hours, 3 Minutes	178 Miles
Johnson	Vienna	3 Hours, 35 Minutes	237 Miles	<u>5 Hours, 10 Minutes</u>	<u>327 Miles</u>
Kane	Geneva	2 Hours, 44 Minutes	177 Miles	55 Minutes	41.7 Miles
Kankakee	Kankakee	2 Hours, 1 Minute	128 Miles	1 Hour, 2 Minutes	44.3 Miles
Kendall	Yorkville	2 Hours, 12 Minutes	136 Miles	35 Minutes	21.9 Miles
Knox	Galesburg	1 Hour, 25 Minutes	93.4 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 36 Minutes</u>	<u>164 Miles</u>
Lake	Waukegan	3 Hours, 9n Minutes	205 Miles	1 Hour, 17 Minutes	70.2 Miles
LaSalle	Ottawa	1 Hour, 42 Minutes	110 Miles	55 Minutes	50 Miles
Lawrence	Lawrenceville	3 Hours, 11 Minutes	169 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 20 Minutes</u>	<u>244 Miles</u>
Lee	Dixon	2 Hours, 19 Minutes	136 Miles	1 Hour, 38 Minutes	99.5 Miles
Livingston	Pontiac	1 Hour, 12 Minutes	78.3 Miles	1 Hour, 8 Minutes	65.5 Miles
Logan	Lincoln	9 Minutes	5.1 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 8 Minutes</u>	<u>134 Miles</u>
Macon	Decatur	47 Minutes	37.2 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 29 Minutes</u>	<u>150 Miles</u>
Macoupin	Carlinville	1 Hour, 13 Minutes	77.8 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 19 Minutes</u>	<u>215 Miles</u>
Madison	Edwardsville	1 Hour, 33 Minutes	104 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 40 Minutes</u>	<u>241 Miles</u>
Marion	Salem	2 Hours, 23 Minutes	132 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 55 Minutes</u>	<u>240 Miles</u>
Marshall	Lacon	1 Hour 12 Minutes	72.5 Miles	<u>1 Hour, 38 Minutes</u>	<u>98.2 Miles</u>
Mason	Havana	52 Minutes	48.8 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 44 Minutes</u>	<u>165 Miles</u>
Massac	Metropolis	3 Hours, 58 Minutes	261 Miles	<u>5 Hours, 33 Minutes</u>	<u>351 Miles</u>
McDonough	Macomb	1 Hour, 38 Minutes	88.5 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 23 Minutes</u>	<u>200 Miles</u>
McHenry	Woodstock	3 Hours	197 Miles	1 Hour, 25 Minutes	76 Miles
McLean	Bloomington	40 Minutes	39.7 Miles	<u>1 Hour, 44 Minutes</u>	<u>105 Miles</u>
Menard	Petersburg	39 Minutes	34.9 Miles	2 Hours, 45 Minutes	172 Miles
Mercer	Aledo	2 Hours, 2 Minutes	131 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 45 Minutes</u>	<u>168 Miles</u>
Monroe	Waterloo	2 Hours, 10 Minutes	145 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 21 Minutes</u>	<u>280 Miles</u>
Montgomery	Hillsboro	1 Hour, 14 Minutes	78.5 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 21 Minutes</u>	<u>216 Miles</u>
Morgan	Jacksonville	1 Hour, 2 Minutes	65.4 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 7 Minutes</u>	<u>203 Miles</u>
Moultrie	Sullivan	1 Hour, 16 Minutes	68.0 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 2 Minutes</u>	<u>179 Miles</u>
Ogle	Oregon	2 Hours, 25 Minutes	165 Miles	1 Hour, 38 Minutes	96.8 Miles
Peoria	Peoria	42 Minutes	46.1 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 4 Minutes</u>	<u>133 Miles</u>
Perry	Pinckneyville	2 Hours, 37 Minutes	167 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 48 Minutes</u>	<u>305 Miles</u>
Piatt	Monticello	1 Hour	58.9 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 22 Minutes</u>	<u>127 Miles</u>
Pike	Pittsfield	1 Hour, 32 Minutes	100 Miles	<u>3 Hours 38 Minutes</u>	<u>238 Miles</u>
Pope	Golconda	3 Hours, 58 Minutes	259 Miles	<u>5 Hours, 33 Minutes</u>	<u>349 Miles</u>
Pulaski	Mound City	3 Hours, 59 Minutes	263 Miles	<u>5 Hours, 32 Minutes</u>	<u>352 Miles</u>
Putnam	Hennepin	1 Hour, 33 Minutes	91.5 Miles	1 Hour, 25 Minutes	81.5 Miles



Randolph	Chester	2 Hours, 49 Minutes	178 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 58 Minutes</u>	<u>315 Miles</u>
Richland	Olney	2 Hours, 49 Minutes	147 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 57 Minutes</u>	<u>229 Miles</u>
Rock Island	Rock Island	2 Hours, 8 Minutes	146 Miles	2 Hours, 21 Minutes	148 Miles
Saline	Harrisburg	3 Hours, 36 Minutes	227 Miles	<u>5 Hours, 9 Minutes</u>	<u>316 Miles</u>
Sangamon	Springfield	34 Minutes	31.4 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 39 Minutes</u>	<u>169 Miles</u>
Schuyler	Rushville	1 Hour, 28 Minutes	81.5 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 20 Minutes</u>	<u>198 Miles</u>
Scott	Winchester	1 Hour, 14 Minutes	81.8 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 21 Minutes</u>	<u>219 Miles</u>
Shelby	Shelbyville	1 Hour, 22 Minutes	79 Miles	<u>3 Hours, 11 Minutes</u>	<u>195 Miles</u>
St. Clair	Belleville	2 Hours	124 Miles	<u>4 Hours 6 Minutes</u>	<u>262 Miles</u>
Stark	Toulon	1 Hour, 22 Minutes	88.4 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 6 Minutes</u>	<u>124 Miles</u>
Stephenson	Freeport	2 Hours, 53 Minutes	198 Miles	2 Hours, 8 Minutes	128 Miles
Tazewell	Pekin	44 Minutes	41.4 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 12 Minutes</u>	<u>137 Miles</u>
Union	Jonesboro	3 Hours, 34 Minutes	216 Miles	<u>5 Hours, 22 Minutes</u>	<u>353 Miles</u>
Vermilion	Danville	1 Hour, 43 Minutes	116 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 36 Minutes</u>	<u>122 Miles</u>
Wabash	Mount Carmel	3 Hours, 34 Minutes	185 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 41 Minutes</u>	<u>267 Miles</u>
Warren	Monmouth	1 Hour, 42 Minutes	113 Miles	<u>2 Hours, 50 Minutes</u>	<u>179 Miles</u>
Washington	Nashville	2 Hours, 17 Minutes	149 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 28 Minutes</u>	<u>286 Miles</u>
Wayne	Fairfield	3 Hours, 5 Minutes	163 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 16 Minutes</u>	<u>245 Miles</u>
White	Carmi	3 Hours, 32 Minutes	229 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 54 Minutes</u>	<u>276 Miles</u>
Whiteside	Morrison	2 Hours, 21 Minutes	138 Miles	2 Hours, 7 Minutes	126 Miles
Will	Joliet	2 Hours, 2 Minutes	137 Miles	16 Minutes	6.3 Miles
Williamson	Marion	3 Hours, 16 Minutes	214 Miles	<u>4 Hours, 50 Minutes</u>	<u>304 Miles</u>
Winnebago	Rockford	2 Hours, 33 Minutes	173 Miles	1 Hour, 47 Minutes	103 Miles
Woodford	Eureka	53 Minutes	56.1 Miles	<u>1 Hour, 47 Minutes</u>	<u>104 Miles</u>

Number of Counties that currently have a greater than 4 hour drive to Logan C.C.	2
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Number of counties that will have a greater than 4 hour drive if moved to Stateville C.C.	28
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Number of Counties that will have an increased commute time and distance	78
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The department is going to deprive a large percentage of its population from seeing their friends, families and loved ones. For the incarcerated population, maintaining familial bonds, friendships, and relationships are crucial and vitally important to both rehabilitation and re-entry into society. The department claims, “that a

northern facility would pair with the centrally located Decatur Correctional” is extremely misleading and also a half truth. The other half of that truth is Decatur Correctional does not and cannot house individuals designated as SMI or those with Mental Health needs, individuals with violent crimes (except on a case by case basis but would be a rare circumstance), individuals in disciplinary status or individuals with behavioral needs. Less than approximately 10% of Logan's current population meets the criteria for Decatur. Furthermore, Decatur is not a Reception and Classification facility, meaning all county intakes would have to travel to Crest Hill.

## Programing

The department does provide programming, educational, religious, and recreational services. Sure, more would always be beneficial, but we are living in the 21st century and more and more people are; taking online courses to attain a degree, utilizing tele-health services, working remotely, attending community meetings remotely, and participating in religious services remotely. What better way to help re-integrate individuals in the Department's custody to society than actually preparing them to re-enter society? The days of book and paper are quickly becoming obsolete and the Department needs to catch up with the times. There is no reason that more services and programming to the individual in custody population cannot be offered and done so remotely. The idea that in order to offer more programs and services that we have to relocate 1,100 incarcerated individuals and 600+ careers north is absolute insanity. Technology has no geographical requirements and could be instituted at any facility at their current locations. Additionally, there are about 12 institutions of higher learning that are within 1.5 hours of Logan's Current Location that I'm sure would be more than happy to provide educational and programming services. A review of the Department's website lists no information or procedure for how these institutions should apply or approach the department in order to provide these services.

## Staffing.

The Department's own provided staffing levels for Stateville and Joliet (on the CGFA Website provided on 4-26-24), leave any rational person to come to the following question: If Stateville has a vacancy rate of 36% ( Security 39%, Non-Security 23%) and Joliet has a vacancy rate of 47% ( Security 56%, Non-Security 6%) does a 3rd facility in this area really make sense either fiscally or rationally? Where are these staff going to come from? While the department claims that all staff would have “jobs” the hard truth is that a massive portion of Logans staff have no position available for them within 90 miles and would also have to take severe cuts to their families livelihoods.

The current staff at Logan Correctional Center have worked with the female pop In Conclusion for years. We have specialized training, experience, and communication and de-escalation skills that have been learned over years firsthand experience. The last time the female population had a facility move and a staffing change, the number of staff assaults, and critical incidents drastically increased when compared to the numbers from Dwight the last few years it was opened.

I believe the general consensus is clear. Building a new facility would be a wonderful and fiscally responsible decision, but moving Logan Correctional Center from its centrally located position in/near Lincoln would negatively impact the incarcerated population, the staff and the central Illinois community as a whole. If the new facility is built in Crest Hill it will sit empty and be wasted as the department won't be able to hire. The new facility should be built on or near Logans current location, centrally located in the state.

I stand in support of building a new facility, but I FIRMLY stand in opposition to moving Logan Correctional Center from its centrally located position in the geographic center of the state to the North.

In Solidarity,  
Craig Linne



LOGAN COUNTY  
COUNTY BOARD OFFICE  
601 Broadway St., Lincoln, IL 62656  
217.732.6400

6.3.24

Members of CGFA:

My name is Emily Davenport and I'm the Chairman of the Logan County Board. As we're all aware, Logan Correctional Center is in desperate need of reconstruction. The neglect and lack of funding to keep up with the aging facility has finally caught up with the state and we can no longer kick the can down the road.

I'm sure you're aware by now that Logan has over 454 staff members: 358 in security positions and 96 in non-security positions as of March 2024. Out of those 454 employees, 153 live in Logan County, almost 200 live in Sangamon, 30 live in McLean, 20 are from Mason County and the rest live in the surrounding counties. So clearly, this does not only affect Logan County.

I have received letters of support from all of our surrounding counties asking the Governor to keep Logan Correctional in Logan County. They all realize this is NOT just a Logan County issue. In total, this affects almost 20 other counties surrounding Logan who have employees that currently commute to Logan on a daily basis. The Department of Corrections claims that employees can transfer to 1 of the 6 facilities that are within 90 miles of Logan, and that there are approximately 850 positions available at those facilities. Two of those facilities: Jacksonville and Taylorville have a very low employee vacancy rate making it challenging for employees to transfer to either of those two facilities, so in reality it only leaves 4 facilities that employees can transfer to.

Also, as you may know, for the past few years, the department has been downsizing. Just a few years ago, it made a partial closure at Pontiac and attempted another partial closure at Vandalia. Since the department's plan is to close Logan in 3 to 5 years there are no guarantees that the 850 current vacancies will still exist. Even if those positions do exist, many times spouses have their own jobs, their kids are enrolled in school, and they've planted roots in their community. These reasons alone would make transferring to another facility extremely hard or even impossible, not to mention costly considering the high prices of gas these days. All this hits very close to home for me since my husband Josh has worked at Logan for almost 8 years. I understand the uncertainty that a lot of families are going through right now.

There will also be a huge impact on the prison population and their families if Logan is moved to Stateville. As of March 2024, Logan has a total population of 1156 and 54% of the women originate from counties closer to Logan than Stateville. Also as of March 2024, Decatur Correctional Center has a total population of 349. Of those, 68% originate from counties that are closer to Logan than Stateville. Additionally, Decatur is the only other women's prison in the state, but it's a minimum-security facility whereas Logan is a multi-level security facility. Since Decatur is a smaller, minimum-security facility, more downstate Illinois women would be moved to Stateville, further from their loved ones.

For a quick example of why that means more travel, currently the farthest a family has to travel from northern Illinois to visit a loved one at Logan is roughly 3 ½ hours. Meanwhile, the farthest a family from southern Illinois

would have to travel to reach Stateville is 5 ½ - 6 hours. Traveling this amount of distance is costly to maintain a relationship with a loved one and hard on a family, especially ones with young children.

The poverty factor of the residents of Logan also comes into play with the possible relocation. In order to get that number, you take the poverty rate of the counties of origin for Logan inmates and multiply it by the number of Logan inhabitants who were sentenced from that county. For Cook, the collar counties, and the north and northwest regions of the state, the poverty number is 72.488. The poverty number for the central parts of the state that also include the western, eastern and southern parts is 83.395. This means moving Logan to Stateville would hurt the poorest families in the state forcing them to travel farther to visit their incarcerated family member than they do now.

Lastly, I would like to ask the department how they intend to transport inmates to their court appearances if they move Logan to Stateville. Currently, some inmates have to be driven 4 ½ hours one-way for their court appearance. So if Logan is moved to Stateville, which is 2 ½ hours farther north, does that mean staff is going to have to drive 7 hours one-way for an inmate's court appearance? The same could be said for the county sheriff departments when they must deliver inmates to the department. Most sheriff departments are short staffed, so to require some of them to drive 7 hours one way to deliver an inmate once they've been sentenced to the Department of Corrections is going to be a huge and costly burden. These situations are not realistic by any means. These are among some of the many questions that are left to be considered and answered by the department and the Governor.

Thank you for your time and service to the citizens of Illinois. Please do the right thing and recommend that Logan Correctional Center be rebuilt in Logan County.

Emily Davenport

Logan County Board Chairman

Ronda Shelton, Chair  
LOGAN COUNTY DEMOCRATS



Jim Drew, Chair  
LOGAN COUNTY REPUBLICANS



June 4, 2024

The Honorable Governor JB Pritzker  
401 South Spring Street  
Springfield, IL 62704

Dear Governor Pritzker,

As respective Chairs of the Democrat and Republican parties of Logan County Illinois, we are reaching out to you in a bipartisan initiative regarding the status of Logan Correctional Center. We come to you on behalf of all citizens of Lincoln, IL, the employees and inmates of Logan Correctional Center, members of AFSCME Council 2073 and AFSCME Local 31. Our community has taken a huge financial hit with the recent closings of Lincoln College and Lincoln Christian University. The loss of Logan Correctional Center to Will County would be another devastating blow to the citizens of Logan County, as well as neighboring counties. Logan Correctional Center staff travel from 21 counties outside of Logan County for employment at the facility.

Logan County desperately needs the economic stability that Logan Correctional Center has provided our community since 1978. We are in strong support of rebuilding Logan Correctional Center to create a safe environment for offenders and staff. Our plea is to rebuild in Lincoln, Logan County. Thank you for your careful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Ronda Shelton, Chair  
Logan County Democrat  
Central Committee

Jim Drew, Chair  
Logan County Republican  
Central Committee





ILLINOIS CORRECTIONS LODGE # 263  
**FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE**  
4341 ACER GROVE # B, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, 62711  
ILFOP263.COM

June 6, 2024

COGFA (Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability) Members:

I am writing today to express our concerns regarding the announced proposed closure of Logan Correctional Center and relocation to, and renovation of, Stateville Correctional Center.

We have reviewed the report regarding the impacts of this proposed closure and relocation dated April 26, 2024 prepared by Geoffrey J.D. Hewings. The report appears to be thorough regarding many of the challenges regarding the Stateville site such as the wet lands, endangered species, toxic waste removal, and potential flooding in the proposed area among other potential issues. Also identified in this report is the Appropriated Value of the 12 active capital projects currently underway at Logan totaling \$26,412,412.98. This is the largest capital spend within the IDOC following Menard at \$59,883,666.84.

What we don't see is consideration and analysis of the impact to the IDOC, related state agencies, and ultimately the State budget for ancillary services related to this proposal. A John Howard Association report dated May 10, 2024 states 34% of women in IDOC custody are from Cook and surrounding counties. Logically, a large percentage of the remaining 64% would be from central and southern Illinois leading to the following areas of concern; vehicles and staff required for safe transportation to and from court mandated dates, particularly to the southern courts; DCFS case management for mandatory visitation, again specifically related to the southern regions of Illinois; and Parole violator returns or drop offs.

Logan is currently the only maximum security and mental health facility for women. The IDOC is currently unable to relocate offenders to another facility in the case of assault, and investigations. Relocating offenders is, and should continue to be, standard practice under these circumstances. Any future facilities should make this a priority. Logan is large enough to create accommodations for such situations. Completing the now active projects mentioned above is a start towards what could be a phased plan for making needed improvements for this purpose.

All of these concerns directly relate to staffing, safety and security requirements to provide the best environment possible for staff and offenders. There are certainly many more issues to consider that may be less obvious but equally important to be identified. Dwight Correctional Center closure and move should be the guide to best practices. While this proposed relocate and rebuild is a far greater distance, it is important to identify and address all currently unforeseen issues in advance of any final decision.

The House of Representatives of the Ninety-Ninth General Assembly of the State of Illinois presented HR0963 requesting the Auditor General to conduct an audit "to include, but not be limited to, determining the fiscal impact on the State of Dwight Correctional Center closing; any cost saving achieved by the closing; and the impact the closure and transfer of offenders have made on the State's correctional system...". Ultimately the resolution was put up for vote but did not pass. Therefore, the audit was never completed and the actual costs remains unknown. At this time, it is imperative that the audit is completed to fully understand the true costs and impact of this proposed closure, relocation, and rebuild. There will certainly be cost overruns and unexpected expenses not originally accounted for in the budget. A lesson learned approach, considering the magnitude of the cost and scope of this proposal, would be invaluable.

Finally, we see that the Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability voted 3-7 to reject the recommendation to close the Dwight Correctional Center. We ask for your consideration to once again reject this proposal in its current state until a complete accounting can be prepared and presented. To that end, we ask for an audit of the Dwight closure be conducted to identify currently unrealized areas that have the potential to negatively impact IDOC, State of Illinois, staff, offenders, and ultimately the community.

Scot Ward, President, IL FOP Corrections Lodge 263

**Testimony Submitted to the Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability Hearing Regarding Proposed Closures of Stateville Correctional Center and Logan Correctional Center**

***June 10, 2024***

To the Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony as Illinois considers closing two prisons, each nearly or more than a century old. As a survivor of gun violence and the National Director for Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice, safety is paramount to me and to our nearly 10,000 members in Illinois, and nearly 200,000 members nationwide. Because safety and stopping cycles of crime are so important to us, we support the efforts of Illinois policymakers to increase focus on rehabilitation for people incarcerated in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC), and reallocate resources to efforts proven to reduce recidivism and increase public safety.

Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice brings together victims of violent crime to advance policies that help underserved crime victims and stop cycles of crime. Our Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice network is a flagship program of the Alliance for Safety and Justice (ASJ), a multi-state organization that promotes effective approaches to public safety in key states across the country. ASJ and CSSJ support strategies that reduce costly overreliance on incarceration, increase trauma recovery services, and prioritize safe communities.

***Crime Victims Understand Harm and the Importance of Stopping Cycles of Crime***

As crime survivors we have lived through the era when every state used incarceration as the primary tool to hold people accountable for causing harm. Many of us come from communities where a venn diagram would have overlap between being a victim of crime and incarcerated; and many of our families experienced both. We felt this especially in the 80's and 90's when the overuse of incarceration was at its peak. At that time, prisons did little to rehabilitate and cycles of crime raged on our doorsteps and in our homes. We felt less safety in our communities, and we can imagine, prison staff and people in prisons also felt less safe. We have learned so much since then. What we now know for sure is that there are multiple drivers of violence. A lack of rehabilitation, poor community conditions, and sometimes unresolved trauma can all contribute to the cycles of crime that devastate families and destroy communities.

State public safety policies in Illinois and elsewhere haven't always aligned with safety but this is an opportunity for Illinois' leaders to ensure they do. In recent years, Illinois has shown itself to be a leader in safety. It has safely and smartly better served victims of crime and reduced its prison population through establishing Trauma Recovery Centers, crafted smart sentencing reforms focused on evidence-based rehabilitative credits, made front end investments like Redeploy Illinois and Adult Redeploy Illinois and more. All of those efforts have made our Illinois members feel safer. And we believe that the state can continue on this path and ensure that



safety and rehabilitation are the focus with continued investments on safety solutions that we know work.

### ***We Trust the Research and Evidence that Shows Rehabilitation Stops Cycles of Crime***

Research has consistently shown that providing opportunities for rehabilitation reduces crime and improves long-term public safety outcomes.<sup>1</sup> A comprehensive analysis by CGL Companies (CGL) of IDOC facilities found that both Stateville Correctional Center and Logan Correctional Center have severe infrastructure deficiencies, approaching an “inoperable” rating, that undermine the safety of these facilities as well as their ability to advance rehabilitative goals.

For example, housing units lack space for programming or out-of-cell time, and contain mold and mildew that is hazardous for the people who live and work in them.<sup>2</sup> Transitioning away from these outdated and crumbling facilities will support the IDOC’s goal of reducing recidivism by allowing resources to instead be invested in supporting rehabilitation.

Not only does focusing on rehabilitation increase safety, but it improves public spending efficiency: every \$1 invested in education and vocational programs saves \$4 to \$5 in the three years post-release.<sup>3</sup> Defrayed costs can be reinvested in expanding rehabilitative program capacity and strengthening reentry supports that improve public safety.

The public safety benefits of providing meaningful access to rehabilitative programming during incarceration are well-documented.<sup>4</sup>

- Educational programming and vocational training can help people secure and maintain employment after returning home from prison, which in turn is associated with lower recidivism rates and increased public safety.<sup>5</sup>
- One study by RAND found that people who participate in correctional education and training programs have 43% lower odds of recidivating than those who did not, and 13% higher chances of getting a job after incarceration.
- For participants in vocational training, the odds of being employed after release are 28% higher than those who do not.<sup>6</sup>
- Participation in multiple types of rehabilitation while incarcerated, such as vocational training, educational programming, and therapy, brings the best public safety return.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., National Institute of Justice (2016). Five Things About Deterrence.; National Research Council (2014). The Growth of Incarceration in the United States: Causes and Consequences.; Nagin, D.S. (2013). Deterrence: A Review of the Evidence by a Criminologist for Economists. *Annual Review of Economics*, 5:83-105.

<sup>2</sup> CGL (2023). Facility Master Plan: Illinois Department of Corrections. Accessed from: <https://idoc.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idoc/reportsandstatistics/documents/IDOC-Master-Plan-Report-FINAL-MAY-2023-07-12-23-67.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Lois M. Davis et. al. 2013. Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults. RAND Corporation. Accessed from: [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR266.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html)

<sup>4</sup> Duwe, G. (2017). *The Use and Impact of Correctional Programming for Inmates on Pre- and Post-Release Outcomes*. National Institute of Justice. Retrieved from: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/250476.pdf>;

Aos, S., Miller, M., & Drake, E. (2006). Evidence-Based Adult Corrections Programs: What Works and What Does Not. Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

<sup>5</sup> Duwe, G. (2017). *The Use and Impact of Correctional Programming for Inmates on Pre- and Post-Release Outcomes*. National Institute of Justice. Retrieved from: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/250476.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Davis, L.M. et. al. (2013). *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults*. RAND Corporation. Accessed from: [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR266.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html)

<sup>7</sup> Smith, L.G. (2005). PA DOC Education Outcome Study. Accessed from: <https://web.archive.org/web/20201002064655/https://pacrimstats.info/PCCDReports/EvaluationResearch/Completed%20Research>

- Engaging in a larger number of hours, or increased dosage, of rehabilitative activities such as education and vocational training also lowers recidivism rates further.<sup>8</sup> For example, one study found that a one percentage point increase in programming resulted in a 22 percent decrease in recidivism.<sup>9</sup>

### ***Safety is Important for All of Us, Including the People Who Live and Work in Illinois' Prisons***

We also recognize that the CGL report found that many correctional systems are facing “historic-level retention and vacancy issues,” and IDOC vacancy rates are over 25 percent system-wide.<sup>10</sup> Research shows that education and vocational programming and therapeutic interventions are associated with fewer disciplinary incidents among participants.<sup>11</sup> This in turn creates a safer prison environment for both staff and incarcerated people. Effectively promoting rehabilitation for incarcerated individuals requires reducing overreliance on incarceration in general, and, for the people who are in prison, providing an environment and resources that facilitate future success.

Illinois has made good progress in recent years toward building better safety solutions, and can continue to build on these successes. In tandem, the state must move swiftly to address major challenges with IDOC infrastructure that are hindering the department’s ability to provide the rehabilitative pathways in prison that keep communities across the state safe. It is virtually impossible to offer education or therapy that can shift the trajectory of someone’s life in a crumbling building with no programming space, and the people who live and work in prisons require an environment free from biohazards in order to accomplish correctional goals. Shifting away from outdated and harmful infrastructure will improve safety outcomes in Illinois.

In conclusion, our expertise is in safety because we have experienced the type of harm we don’t want anyone else to experience, ever. Therefore, the focus of our comments on this plan to close old, unsafe facilities is the opportunity to right size investments in the many things that keep us safe.

Aswad Thomas  
Vice President, Alliance for Safety and Justice  
National Director, Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice

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[/Corrections%20and%20Alternative%20Sanctions/Treatment%20Programs/DOCEdOutcomeStudy052005.pdf](#); Latessa, E., et. al. (2015). *Evaluation of Ohio’s Prison Programs*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/corrections/docs/InTheNews/Prison%20Study%20Final%20Report%2010-26-15.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Adams, K., Bennett, K. J., Flanagan, T. J., Marquart, J.W., Cuvelier, S. J., Fritsch, E., Gerber, J., Longmire, D., and Burton, V. (1994) “A Large-Scale Multidimensional Test of the Effect of Prison Education Programs on Offenders’ Behavior.”

<sup>9</sup> Duwe, G. (2017). *The Use and Impact of Correctional Programming for Inmates on Pre- and Post-Release Outcomes*. National Institute of Justice. Retrieved from: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/250476.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> CGL (2023). Facility Master Plan: Illinois Department of Corrections. Accessed from: <https://idoc.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idoc/reportsandstatistics/documents/IDOC-Master-Plan-Report-FINAL-MAY-2023-07-12-23-67.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Duwe, G. (2017). *The Use and Impact of Correctional Programming for Inmates on Pre- and Post-Release Outcomes*. National Institute of Justice. Retrieved from: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/250476.pdf>

I write to you in opposition to the closure and relocation of Logan Correctional to Crest Hill. I believe the proposal is flawed and will have serious negative ramifications for the Lincoln community, the employee's of Logan Correctional and the population it houses.

I came to Logan by accident. I attended an informational event being held at the State Fair and spoke to a woman that would become my future Warden, a Deputy Director then Chief. She was very generous with her time and told me about her experience. We talked for quite a while. I was interested in a state job, but had never considered the Department of Corrections. She appreciated my enthusiasm and encouraged me to apply to be a Correctional Officer. I told her, I'm no "knuckle dragger" and don't see myself as a brawler. She said that's what CO's are like on TV. She assured me being a CO was more than just shouting and daily fights with inmates and it was an excellent way to work up to becoming a Correctional Counselor, a job I had never heard of. As she described it, if a Correctional Officer helps maintain order within the facility, a Correctional Counselor works to have the offenders want to keep order for themselves. I am a big believer of the "teach a man to fish" concept. This appealed to me greatly, and after 8 years as a CO, I promoted to Counselor. Now much has changed in my 9 years with the Department. We work with Individuals in Custody now and Logan's unique composition makes the population much less homogeneous than any facility in the Men's Division. We would represent several different institutions, with their all their specialties, all within Logan Correctional.

As for the economic argument, I am sympathetic to the notion the state should not maintain spending for the sole purpose of economic activity. However, I feel that closing Logan and rebuilding it elsewhere will not prove advantageous. It's worth noting that yes, the closure of Logan would directly affect some 450 constituents their children and families. The ripple effect would have an even greater impact as outlined in part, by the report prepared by Dr. Hewings. However, the Department's lack of planning makes an apples-to-apples comparison impossible. We have no gauge as to the size or scope of what the new modern Logan or a correctional facility of the modern era looks like. We don't have an idea of what types of buildings, bedspace, healthcare, mental health, programing, staffing requirements, staffing mixture, education level etc. the department has in mind. Although Dr. Hewings is an esteemed professional, he cannot supply a complete and accurate estimation without many of the necessary facts the Department has yet to decide. We can surmise is that the closure and relocation will have absolute negative repercussions for the Logan County community and an as yet, unknown benefit to the Will County community. Dr. Hewings report did make clear the impact to the local economy of Logan County will be substantial (12,000 area jobs) vs the relatively small positive impact it could have on Will County (320,000 area jobs). According to the CGL the most fiscally responsible course seems to be to move the Women's Division to Illinois River for the price of approx. 12 million vs the hundreds of millions to build a new facility at Crest Hill. This would provide the women with a newer facility that is parity to the Men's Division as the footprint of Illinois River represents the incarcerated lives of thousands of men currently in IDOC custody.

As it pertains to the Individuals, this is cohort I am most concerned for. I have yet to understand how the department plans to staff the Logan of the future without a concrete plan or even a blueprint of one. The staff at Logan are also proponents and supportive of programing, education, vocational, and work details. By the numbers provided to CGFA, Logan currently has a 34% Vacancy rate. Stateville has a vacancy rate of 36%. And Joliet Treatment Center's vacancy rate is an eye watering 47%. That is a nearly 50% increase in vacancy rate as compared to Logan. Its important to note that DHS is currently staffing a significant percentage of Joliet Treatment Center due partly to IDOC's inability to hire.

The Department's most recent Advisory Board meetings are evidence of the department's knowledge of this questionable move.

Dr. David Olsen of Loyola University during the most recent Advisory Board meeting offered that his recent work with a colleague has seen a reduced use of prison in most counties due in part to less crime but also a change in sentencing. However, they have noticed an increase in rural communities that they attribute, in part, to a lack of treatment services (12/12/23 Adult Advisory Board Meeting minutes). This would seem to suggest a trend of decreased population from Cook and Collar Counties and an increase in down state population.

At the same advisor board meeting on 12/12/23, AWP Woods Advised the Board that DHS has been helping provide mental health treatment for JITC. Ast. Director Williams reiterates this point explaining "one of the department's biggest hardships is staffing. They are having difficulty finding people who meet the qualifications to work there (JITC). Transfers are limited and DHS is just as short staffed as DOC." Staff Development Training Manager Steve Ryan continues that security staff receive the same basic COT training with a two-week specialized training that is received at the facility. For perspective, JTC security vacancy rate stands at 56% vs Logan's 37%, almost a full 20 points higher.

The theme continues, at the 9/26/23 meeting Dr. Olsen asks if Joliet Treatment Center is having difficulty finding treatment providers? Director Hughes points out that JTC is another facility struggling with staff.

It seems they are still staffing these positions even though its in Will County and open for some time. They are still reliant on DHS for staff. Which begs the question, if you can't staff the facilities already there, how can you better provide education, programing, vocational training, social work, mental health services, medical services.

Logan needs fixed, the conditions are terrible and have been for years, through general assembly visits and even a ceremonial Governor signing. I am an ally in the notion of seeing inmates, some of which I've worked with for years, leave Logan and go back to

society to lead productive lives. The best part of my day is when someone comes up and tells me about a recent success they have had. Or they want to do something rash and likely detrimental, but they slow down, think it over and decide for themselves to do something better. My metrics are less sophisticated and more anecdotal but if they do right, even when no-one is looking, I will likely never see them again. I want that for each of them. I want to help in achieving that mission. Their success is my success.

As a staff member of Logan, I have grave concerns that well meaning people, with good intentions are creating policy and procedures leaving out stakeholders they disagree with. I help teach concepts like motivated reasoning and bias, and I dare say, those with advanced degrees are also susceptible and often the most convinced of their absolutist position. Moreover, those making these decisions will likely not be around in the years to fully understand the consequences. However, I have folks on my caseload that can and will be negatively impacted...I have a community that will be negatively impacted...taxpayers, deserving the best bang for their buck will be negatively impacted. Let us work together to achieve our agreed results, there are a lot of good people with good ideas being locked out of this process. Let's do better. This body has a voice, its comprised of people who care enough to show up in our community, who became legislators to do right by its citizens. The rationale for closing Logan only to spend hundreds of millions to rebuild an as yet unknown design, somewhere they already can't staff, under the guise of, there are more services resources available, is dubious at best. It appears to be a conclusion looking for rational. Poor Policy is not fixed by a new zip code. Let us work collaboratively to achieve our shared goals, for less money, right here in Logan County.

Josh Perkins

**June 11, 2024**

**THE COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Attn: Facility Closure

802 Stratton Building | Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commission Members,

Before I begin with the body of my letter, I wish to thank you for your willingness to serve in this capacity. Whatever recommendations you offer will no doubt be made in what your genuinely see as in the best interests of the DOC in particular and the people of Illinois in general.

My name is David Hepler. I am a 40-plus year resident of Lincoln, Illinois. I have never been employed by the State of Illinois in any capacity nor has my wife or our 2 adult children employed by any state agency. The exception could be our son David who previously served in the Illinois National Guard for 8 years. Essentially, no one in our family has a vested interest in where a contemporary facility will be located. It is because of many hundreds, if not thousands, of personal and private interactions with DOC employees and their families that I feel compelled to advocate on their behalf and specifically in favor of rebuilding this facility in its current location.

By way of brief background, I was a chiropractic physician for 38 years; the last 37 of those years with a practice in Lincoln, Illinois, retiring in December of 2019. I also was an elected member of the Logan County Board for 7 terms, service in nearly every possible capacity including as its Vice Chairman and Chairman: retiring in late 2022. I also was elected on 4 consecutive occasions to chair the Logan County Regional Planning Commission. The longstanding and diverse experiences provided me hundreds, if not thousands of interactions with the public on a plethora of topics.

Most prominent amongst these were the hundreds and likely thousands of patient conversations in my office. These were always conducted in a setting of absolute privacy and held in the strictest of confidentiality. They reflected the candid and unvarnished sentiments of those persons who work at one of the 2 local prisons.



I can state, without equivocation, that I cannot recall a single such conversation that expressed even the slightest sense of diminishment towards the incarcerated population. To the contrary, on the vast majority of such instances, the DOC employees/patients consistently expressed pride in their profession, confidence in their fellow employees, compassion for those persons struggling to have a better life than where they were at present, and a genuine hope that upon release the detained residents will never have to set foot in a prison again. They also were equally hopeful they had touched those persons lives in a positive, encouraging and respectful way.

I often marveled how these DOC employees could work day-in and day-out in an environment that is challenging, can at times be at-risk and is fluid and dynamic in an effort to stay contemporary with societal expectations. In the course of treating 2 generations of DOC employees this is what I witnessed on a near daily basis.

It is my opinion, and with no disparagement meant towards any other locality under consideration, that rebuilding this facility at its current location will provide the next generation of incarcerated individuals with the absolute finest in DOC employees. While the Commission must consider various regional assets and liabilities nothing can be more important than the "human capital" that may ultimately have the greatest impact on the outcome the facility residents wish for and deserve.

Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts.

RESPECTFULLY,

DAVID HEPLER

To: The Commission on Government  
Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure

802 Stratton Building  
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commission Members,

Before I begin with the body of my letter I wish to thank you for <sup>your</sup> willingness to serve in this ~~capacities~~ capacity. Whatever recommendations you ~~make~~ <sup>offer</sup> will no doubt be made in what you genuinely see as in the best interests of the DOC in particular and the people of Illinois in general.

My name is David Hyles. I am a 40-plus year resident of Lincoln, Illinois. I have never been employed by the State of Illinois in any capacity nor is my wife or our 2 adult children employed by any State agency. The exception could be our son David who previously served in the Illinois National Guard for 8 years. Essentially no one in our family has a vested interest in where a ~~new~~ contemporary facility will be located. It is because of many hundreds, if not thousands, of personal and private

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By way of brief background I was a Chiropractic Physician for 38 years; the last 37 of those years with a practice in Lincoln, Illinois, retiring in December of 2019. I also ~~served for 7 terms or was a member~~ was an elected member of the Logan County Board for 7 terms, serving in nearly every possible capacity including as its Vice & Chairman and Chairman; <sup>retiring in late 2022.</sup> I also was elected on 4 consecutive occasions to Chair the Logan County Regional Planning Commission. These longstanding and diverse experiences provided me hundreds if not thousands of interactions with the public on a plethora of topics.

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It is my opinion, and with no disparagement meant towards any other locality under consideration, that rebuilding this ~~for~~ facility at its current location will provide the next generation of incarcerated individuals with the absolute finest in DOC employees. While the Commission must consider various regional assets and liabilities ~~is in top~~ nothing can be more important than the "human capital" that ~~will~~ may ultimately have the greatest impact on the ~~an~~ outcome the facility residents wish for and deserve.

Thank you for consideration of my thoughts.

Respectfully Submitted  
David Hyles

Testimony by the Illinois Justice Project to the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Honorable David Koehler, Illinois Senate, Co-Chair; Honorable C.D. Davismeyer, Illinois House, Co-Chair and Commission Members Hearing on the Proposed closure and rebuild of Stateville and Logan Correction Centers

Co-Chairs Koehler and Davismeyer, and members of the Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony concerning the plan announced March 15, 2024 by Gov. J.B. Pritzker to close and rebuild Logan and Stateville prisons.

The Illinois Justice Project engages in criminal legal system reform efforts that promote policies to make sure Illinois communities are safer, to reduce Illinois' prison population efficaciously and to support those leaving prison with effective and sustaining reentry supports.

ILJP has dedicated countless meetings with people from throughout Illinois to the topic of incarceration, drawing on the expertise of those who have been in prison and those who work in and with the system. The takeaways are this: Incarceration has for far too long been over-relied on as a solution to crime and violence. This has led to the mass incarceration of Illinois residents that disproportionately impacts the poor and people of color. All the while, the system—with an almost 40% recidivism rate – has, despite the individual efforts of many, failed to deliver meaningful rehabilitation or safer communities.

So let us be clear: We support first and foremost policies and strategies that divert individuals from being sentenced to prison, that provide supportive services in smaller community-based settings for lengths of time necessary to deliver those services instead of decades in prisons and that establish pathways for the release for the many who remain in custody. And we would urge strongly that an assessment of the current costs and benefits of operating the Illinois prison system, given its declining population, be relied on to consider whether there are prisons that can be permanently closed.

The Adult Redeploy program is one such diversion program, proving that funding alternative support services in home community can indeed prevent people from being committed to the Illinois prison system. Thousands of people have been spared incarceration under the Redeploy program, providing a cost avoidance of \$51 million a year.

ILJP supports the Medical Release Act, also known as the Joe Coleman Act, which created a pathway for older and infirm incarcerated people to be released from prison, offering relief to them and their families, not to mention saving millions of dollars. The program is underutilized, and officials should consider how to expand its use.

All this said, the conditions at Logan and Stateville as documented in numerous reports, including the Facility Master Plan Report (CGL), which was commissioned by the Illinois Department of Corrections, cannot be ignored.

The report, which is referenced below, includes findings that raise alarms about conditions across the entire system:

- Twenty percent of bed capacity in the system is in prisons opened prior to 1926 that reflect a design “philosophy of the 1800s.” The report describes this philosophy in disturbing terms, as “centered on isolation” where people in custody “would spend their evenings in silence in their cell and work during the day. Little, if any space was needed for programming or out-of-cell time.” While the majority of IDOC’s beds (65 percent) are in prisons that were built during the prison population growth period from 1970 to 2000, many are now experiencing “significant physical plant issues” and “their infrastructure systems (plumbing, electrical, HVAC, etc.) have passed end of life.” The prisons now “lack spaces necessary to accommodate today’s staffing, programming, and treatment needs.”
- Mental health treatment in some Illinois prisons is provided in spaces used for medical treatment such as exam rooms and also in storage closets and break areas and mental health staff was “packed into the rooms, with little space for needed privacy related to mental health treatment.”
- The majority of IDOC’s prisons were opened prior to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990 and the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) in 2004 and “significant physical plant modifications are required to come into compliance with these mandates.” This is especially true for the Stateville, Pontiac, and Menard, the oldest prisons, which have multi-tiered housing units that cannot comply with ADA and make PREA compliance difficult. Other buildings, including medical and dietary at Pontiac are not accessible.

There were also specific, troubling findings about Logan and Stateville:

- Logan Correctional Center opened in the 1870’s as the Illinois Asylum for Feeble-Minded Children, with nearly 1,000 of housing unit beds built more than 90 years ago for people experiencing mental health challenges. The prison was further described as “inefficient, ineffective, and unsuitable” for any population, with an aging coal-fired power system and molding housing units. The prison’s sewer system also is failing, the report stated.
- “The Quarterhouse and X-House” at Stateville were also called “not suitable for any 21st century” prison. The Quarterhouse, designed during the 1800’s, has “little space for out-of-cell time, no program space or office space (other than converted cells).” There is an estimated \$12 million in immediate structural repairs that are needed. In addition, the report notes the prison overall has leaky roofs, peeling paint, an inability to maintain an “ambient temperature” and electrical extension cords running from cell to cell.



Given these conclusions, it is perhaps not surprising to see that IDOC's deferred maintenance budget in fiscal year 2023 was more than \$2.5 billion. This represents 29 percent of the state government's total deferred maintenance for prisons and more than any other state agency. Stateville has the highest level of deferred maintenance at \$286 million. The report also notes that deferred maintenance doubles every five years.

Rebuilding both prisons is a practical move to keep people who are in the custody of the Illinois Department of Corrections safe and healthy. Much more work needs to also be done systemwide to ensure this for all those incarcerated.

We are encouraged that the CLG report also concludes that rebuilding both Logan and Stateville can achieve better conditions to support reentry. Specifically, the report calls for a rebuilt Stateville that has vocational programming and space and "prepares individuals for re-entry into society" with housing units that provide dayroom space, ample cell size, and office space for counselors and support staff.

The recommendations outlined by Gov. Pritzker, though transformative, should serve as a starting point for a more structural reconsideration of a system with extreme staffing shortages and which has seen a 44% drop in population over the past ten years. Especially if the goal is to reduce the physical and mental harms it is causing individuals, which has rippling effects into communities all across Illinois.

Moving people from dilapidated buildings into more modern and rehabilitative prisons is the first step to a deeper transformation, including the potential to permanently close other Illinois prisons. Each step of the process should be guided strongly by an assessment of costs and benefits to taxpayers by closing prisons to a level that reflects the declining prison population. It should prioritize the voices of those who have been incarcerated, their families and the communities to which nearly all incarcerated people return. We at ILJP encourage a focus on placing individuals in prisons that are close to their families and faith-based institutions to provide a strong support system after they are released.

We recognize there are opponents to this plan. It is intended that the recommended changes can make physical working conditions for DOC personnel safer, that it will be easier to hire adequate personnel if the working conditions are better, and that the more humane conditions for the incarcerated will result in fewer negative incidents for both the incarcerated and DOC employees.

The members of this Commission are entrusted with making decisions that are wise, financially prudent and viable for the generations which follow ours. Supporting the plan for recommended closures and rebuilding meets those standards.

## **LOGAN CORRECTIONAL CENTER**

I would like to start by saying I was incensed by a comment made by Governor Pritzker. I paraphrase: Lincoln should not have based the majority of their economic growth on prisons.

As I recall several cities vied for this correctional center and Lincoln was selected. There was much concern in the community regarding who would be housed at the facility and if there would be an influx of residents moving into Lincoln to be closer to the loved one they had incarcerated. The residents were informed that this would be a minimum-security facility and house basically robbers and thieves. It would not house murders, rapists, or child molesters. The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) also assured the community that there would not be an influx of persons moving into Lincoln.

Logan Correctional Center opened in 1978 as a men's prison. I began working at Logan Correctional Center in the early 1980's as a Correctional Counselor. There were indeed murders, rapists, or child molesters living at Logan Correctional Center. To my knowledge there was not an influx of new residents to Lincoln or surrounding areas.

In 1984 Lincoln Correctional Center opened and was a co-ed facility for a brief period. It then became a women's prison, due to the closing of Dwight Correctional Center, which was opened in 1930 and closed in 2013. At some point there was a swap and Logan Correctional Center became the women's prison and Lincoln Correctional Center became a men's prison.

At the present time the Department of Juvenile Justice (DOJJ) is constructing a prison for children on the grounds of what was once Lincoln Developmental Center. It is expected to be operational in 2025.

As of today Lincoln, Illinois has 3 IDOC facilities: Logan Correctional Center (women's prison), Lincoln Correctional Center (men's prison), and a DOJJ opening in 2025. In Illinois there are only 3 facilities that house women. The Logan Correctional Center (Lincoln), Fox Valley Adult Transition Center (Fox Valley), and the Decatur Correctional Center (Decatur). Here are some statistics for each of the facilities:

NAME	YEAR OPENED	CAPICITY	ANNUAL COST PER INMATE
Logan Correctional Center	1978	1,397	\$69,238
Fox Valley Adult Transition Center	1972	128	\$49,460
Decatur Correctional Center	2000	707	\$72,581

The discussion within state government is closing Logan Correction Center and building a new IDOC facility in Crest Hill or possibly Joliet. I am not clear why the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (COGFA) feel moving Logan inmates to Joliet would be a "more regionalized approach...by providing a northern facility to pair with the already centrally located facility in Decatur." Of the women incarcerated at Logan Correction Center presently 54% are from the downstate area.

If a family resides in Metropolis and has to travel to Joliet to see their loved one the trip is 344 miles and will take approximately 5 hours one way. That would be a total of 10 hours of traveling time, assume a 4 hour visit with the inmate, for a total of 14 hours (this is assuming there are no delays due to construction or accidents). This would cause the traveler to be "spent" on their trip home



increasing the likelihood of a possible tragedy. A trip for Metropolis to Lincoln would be 265 miles taking under 4 hours. The traveler is at only 12 hours. Since 54% of the women inmates are from downstate it makes sense to locate a women's facility centrally in the state. There would be a lot of the travelers who would not have the ability to get a motel and meals going to Joliet.

Of the 2 other facilities in Illinois, Decatur and Fox Valley, together they have a maximum capacity of 835 inmates. Logan has a maximum capacity of 2,248 inmates.

I have some questions that are not rhetorical in nature. Why was Dwight Correctional Center open for 83 years before it was shuttered? Why is it necessary to close Logan Correctional Center after only 46 years? If 54% of women incarcerated in Illinois are from downstate, why are you looking at relocating the inmates to Joliet or Crest Hill, neither of which are centrally located in the state of Illinois? The state is offering the displaced staff from Logan Correctional Center to relocate or they would have to commute to another IDOC facility, which would be a commute of 90 minutes (one way) or less to another IDOC facility. Logan Correctional Center staff have "put down roots" in our small community. No one wants to consider commuting for 3 hours every day they are scheduled to work.

I appreciate your time and consideration of rethinking the present track that Logan Correctional Center is on.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cince Bowns, MSW

Lincoln, Illinois

Alexis Pigg  
2607 JT Coffman Drive  
Champaign, IL 61822

Thursday, June 13, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Alexis Pigg and I reside in Champaign County Illinois. I am writing on behalf of Alexandria Macon (Y41433) who is currently housed in Lincoln's Logan Correctional Center.

I am writing to ask that the State of Illinois Department of Corrections and all affiliated parties continue efforts to immediately close Lincoln's Logan Correctional Center given inhumane living and working conditions. There have been a multitude of grievances filed against the facility for rodent infestation affecting kitchen and living quarters, leaky ceilings causing structural deterioration, and subsequent recurrent mold issues affecting staff and inmates similarly.

Relocation of Logan Correctional Center's current population to various facilities within the State is ideal, but early release is also a viable option if all 1,039 inmates cannot be safely and strategically relocated. Criteria for release shall be determined on an individual basis considering "good time" and other factors. Change is necessary within the State of Illinois and transitions aimed to improve the human experience have the potential to reconnect families.

Although, I am only privy to unlivable conditions at Logan Correctional Center specifically, the closure of Stateville Correctional Center should also be considered given its age as people deserve to occupy suitable spaces without recurrent illness or fear of contracting illnesses.

Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,  
Alexis Pigg  
06/11/2024

Stephanie DeFalco  
Y36668

6.7.24

I am an inmate at Logan County Correctional Center.

I am opposed of the closure of my facility.

I would like to see it rebuilt & renovated to accommodate us. My family lives in Woodridge IL. We are centralized in this location. I would not want them to have to drive farther South.

I am also a worker in The Garden Crew. We provide around 15,000 lbs of produce for the facility. I love my job & would like to keep it.

Thank you  


Lesli Jett  
Y47708

6-7-24

I am an inmate at  
Logan Correctional Center.

I do not want this facility  
closed down. My family only  
lives 45 mins away, so it  
makes it very easy on my  
elderly and other family to  
be able to come see me in  
person. I think its a very  
important part of rehabilitation.

I would love to see  
this facility rebuilt. We  
have opportunities to go  
outside for a little bit, and  
we also have clog programs,  
and outside jobs. I want  
to stay here at Logan.

I have a long sentence and  
this location makes my stay  
a little better. Thank you  
for your time.

Lesli Jett





ILLINOIS CORRECTIONS LODGE # 263  
**FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE**  
4341 ACER GROVE # B, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, 62711  
ILFOP263.COM

June 6, 2024

COGFA (Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability) Members:

I am writing today to express our concerns regarding the announced proposed closure of Logan Correctional Center and relocation to, and renovation of, Stateville Correctional Center.

We have reviewed the report regarding the impacts of this proposed closure and relocation dated April 26, 2024 prepared by Geoffrey J.D. Hewings. The report appears to be thorough regarding many of the challenges regarding the Stateville site such as the wet lands, endangered species, toxic waste removal, and potential flooding in the proposed area among other potential issues. Also identified in this report is the Appropriated Value of the 12 active capital projects currently underway at Logan totaling \$26,412,412.98. This is the largest capital spend within the IDOC following Menard at \$59,883,666.84.

What we don't see is consideration and analysis of the impact to the IDOC, related state agencies, and ultimately the State budget for ancillary services related to this proposal. A John Howard Association report dated May 10, 2024 states 34% of women in IDOC custody are from Cook and surrounding counties. Logically, a large percentage of the remaining 64% would be from central and southern Illinois leading to the following areas of concern; vehicles and staff required for safe transportation to and from court mandated dates, particularly to the southern courts; DCFS case management for mandatory visitation, again specifically related to the southern regions of Illinois; and Parole violator returns or drop offs.

Logan is currently the only maximum security and mental health facility for women. The IDOC is currently unable to relocate offenders to another facility in the case of assault, and investigations. Relocating offenders is, and should continue to be, standard practice under these circumstances. Any future facilities should make this a priority. Logan is large enough to create accommodations for such situations. Completing the now active projects mentioned above is a start towards what could be a phased plan for making needed improvements for this purpose.

All of these concerns directly relate to staffing, safety and security requirements to provide the best environment possible for staff and offenders. There are certainly many more issues to consider that may be less obvious but equally important to be identified. Dwight Correctional Center closure and move should be the guide to best practices. While this proposed relocate and rebuild is a far greater distance, it is important to identify and address all currently unforeseen issues in advance of any final decision.

The House of Representatives of the Ninety-Ninth General Assembly of the State of Illinois presented HR0963 requesting the Auditor General to conduct an audit "to include, but not be limited to, determining the fiscal impact on the State of Dwight Correctional Center closing; any cost saving achieved by the closing; and the impact the closure and transfer of offenders have made on the State's correctional system...". Ultimately the resolution was put up for vote but did not pass. Therefore, the audit was never completed and the actual costs remains unknown. At this time, it is imperative that the audit is completed to fully understand the true costs and impact of this proposed closure, relocation, and rebuild. There will certainly be cost overruns and unexpected expenses not originally accounted for in the budget. A lesson learned approach, considering the magnitude of the cost and scope of this proposal, would be invaluable.

Finally, we see that the Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability voted 3-7 to reject the recommendation to close the Dwight Correctional Center. We ask for your consideration to once again reject this proposal in its current state until a complete accounting can be prepared and presented. To that end, we ask for an audit of the Dwight closure be conducted to identify currently unrealized areas that have the potential to negatively impact IDOC, State of Illinois, staff, offenders, and ultimately the community.

Scot Ward, President, IL FOP Corrections Lodge 263

## Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability;

Hello! My name is Tammy Eveans and I am an inmate at Logan Correctional Center here in Lincoln, Illinois. I have been incarcerated for (35) years and so I write this letter as a representative of the Logan Correctional Center inmate population that is opposed to its closure and relocation. While there is no doubt as to the need for infrastructure repair and/or rebuilding, the complete closure of this facility is not warranted. The original announcement of the closures of Stateville Correctional and Logan Correctional Centers by Governor J.B. Pritzker takes me back to 2009-2010 when then Governor Pat Quinn announced the closure of Dwight Correctional Center, in Dwight, Illinois. What do both of these closure announcements have in common? I suggest it to be a politically-motivated tool to bolster or garner more party votes for each of the respective Governors. Given that even the Bible declares that "there is nothing new under the sun" (Eccl. 1:9), I find we are once again at a crossroads of what is actually best for Illinoisans and what seems politically beneficial to those who govern this State.

Let me give you some facts to substantiate my position. First, I speak for all the females at Logan who are from the central and southern regions of Illinois, as well as speaking for the families and loved ones they in turn represent. Logan Correctional Center is comprised of (66.1%)



of the inmate population from central and southern regions / counties, while only a minority of (33.9%) of the inmate population is from that of the northern regions of Cook county and surrounding collar-counties. Now, the mathematics on this is pretty simple and clear cut. Logan, which resides in central Illinois, serves over half of all of the female inmate population for the entire state. Yet Governor Pritzker wants to close Logan, relocate it 3-3.5 hours north to Crest Hill, Illinois, only and truthfully because Logan is located in a "RED" county and Crest Hill is located in a "BLUE" county. We all know what these two colors represent so there is no need to elaborate there. This proposed move is sheer, raw, brass-knuckled politics, and it is the honest, hard-working, faithful, community-oriented people who will be the ones who suffer in this proposed action by our Governor.

When Dwight Correctional Center was being proposed for closure, the entire town community of Dwight (and the surrounding communities and / or towns) all banded together to "SAVE" their livelihoods and home-lives from being decimated should Dwight's closure go through. Their cries, pleas, and fight all fell on deaf ears. To this very day, the town of Dwight, Illinois is forgotten and barren, where once it was blossoming and thriving in every area. The good and up-standing citizens of Dwight and its respective geographical area, who faithfully elected their governmental representatives, were abandoned and discarded by those same elected officials chosen to represent them.

and their interests. Here we all stand, in Lincoln, Illinois, in the very same shoes that those of Dwight, Illinois stood in nearly 14-15 years ago. I reiterate... "there is nothing new under the sun."

Lincoln! Just that name holds value, let alone its land. Adjacent to Logan Correctional Center sits 100(+) acres of land for a possible location of a rebuild. Everything that Governor Pritzker said (and says) that is available in Crest Hill, Illinois for the female incarcerated population is likewise available right here in Lincoln and central Illinois. Springfield's greatest hospitals and medical services, which are utilized and optimized, will continue to be so. Logan Correctional Center has an amazing array of staff, both in security and lay staff, as well as awesome and dedicated volunteers who devote time, energy, and finances into advancing the potential of Logan's female population. There is no reason whatsoever to move Logan and relocate it so far north other than to accommodate a "BLUE" platform for this is an election year. We all know wholeheartedly how politicians make moves and give promises during election years, and then all too quickly forget those promises once in office or once again in office. The only person (or persons) to benefit from this relocation of Logan is Governor Pritzker and the Democratic Party and its platform. (Of course this includes Crest Hill for it is "BLUE" after all — go figure!)

If Governor Pritzker wants a new prison built in



Crest Hill, Illinois, fine — build it and house the northern regional female inmate population there, to their benefit. But leave Logan Correctional Center where it is, thus serving the central and southern regions of Illinois in Lincoln, Illinois. As a member of the inmate population, who is from central/southern Illinois, I use my voice for our families and loved ones to have their opportunities of interests safeguarded by keeping Logan open and rebuilding here. Our families and loved ones are also hard-working, dedicated, faithful, tax-paying citizens of this region of our State. They deserve sincere consideration and to have their voices heard, which is why I am writing this now. As inmates convicted of our crimes, we now serve out our retributions here at Logan and we realize FULLY that our personal interests have no voices. But our voices — my voice — will speak forth for my family and loved ones because the proposed closure and relocation will heap a mountain of hardships upon them, as it will so very many others like myself. Our families and loved ones have committed no crimes and all they want is to stay connected to us because they love us.

My community of peers are the majority, from central and southern Illinois, and we want to remain here. As I stated previously, if Pritzker wants to build another prison up north, by all means go for it! (And by all means I say the one billion dollars it will cost all taxpayers of Illinois.) But leave Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln, Illinois, and

thus give Lincoln and its people the opportunity to continue to represent its great name and land, year after year after year! They deserve it, have earned it, proven it, and represent it well. Our families and loved ones implore likewise, and so do the majority of women from Logan Correctional Center, even a large populous who are actually from northern Illinois. I certainly do! Thank You!

Heralding Right Action,

Tammy Eweans

I.D.# B07539

Logan Correctional Center

cc: Lincoln Daily News

` Lincoln Courier

` Illinois Times

` Bloomington Pantagraph

` Peoria Journal Star

` The Southern Illinoisan

` The Carbondale Times

` self

I am Dr. Donna Bradley, PhD, EdD, JD, a concerned citizen of Lincoln, IL. As a citizen of Lincoln, IL and one who researched criminal justice issues for two doctorates, I offer comments and research-based recommendations.

- 1) It seems more financially prudent to renovate the existing facility than to tear it down and build a completely new facility in a new location. What is the cost-benefit analysis? Is the decision a political one?
- 2) The City of Lincoln has already suffered economic setbacks, such as the closing of Lincoln Christian University and Lincoln College, where I served as Lead Faculty for Criminal Justice initially and Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs at the time of the May 2022 closing. Lincoln College alone impacted the economy by about \$50 million annually and affected 200-300 families. The closing of Logan CC will negatively impact an additional 500 families in a community that is already struggling.
- 3) The most effective corrections goal is the preparation of returning citizens for successful societal re-entry, so that they become employed, tax-paying citizens who do not recidivate. In other words, rehabilitation is the corrections philosophy that makes sense. There are programs at Logan CC that benefit the women that could continue. Renovate the facility with enhancement of the programs in mind and with rehabilitation and preparation for re-entry top of mind. Put the money into classrooms in a newly renovated facility. Increase educational programs because the research shows that the higher the education, the lower recidivism.
- 4) It is reported that the new location may be Will County because there may be more opportunities for "incarcerated women." Please do not politicize the decision. People's lives and futures are at stake. What opportunities are available there that cannot be made or are not already available in Central IL? The barriers to formerly incarcerated persons, I prefer "returning citizens," are the same, no matter where the state incarcerates them. The Department of Corrections must provide the training, the resources, and the partnerships to help them overcome the challenges to re-entry BEFORE release. There is absolutely NO reason that cannot happen right here at Logan CC.
- 5) Returning citizens have voices. Unbelievably, everyone incarcerated did not commit the crime for which they are doing the time. Some plead guilty to crimes that they did not commit because they did not want to take the risk of going to trial and having a jury comprised of individuals with their own opinions, life experiences, and worldviews, decide their fate. Others were in the wrong place, with the wrong people, at the wrong time. Often, women commit crimes because they are in toxic relationships. How will closing Logan CC impact them and their families?
- 6) In sum, I urge reconsideration of any decision to close Logan CC.

**NOTE:** Research about the benefits of education to decreasing recidivism and barriers to re-entry found in **College Admissions Process for Returning Citizens and Ex-Offenders**.

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## The College Admissions Process for Returning Citizens and Ex-Offenders at a Small, Private Midwestern College

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The College Admissions Process for Returning Citizens and Ex-Offenders at a  
Small, Private Midwestern College

by

Donna Bradley

A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

Doctor of Education

School of Education

The College Admissions Process for Returning Citizens and Ex-Offenders at a  
Small, Private Midwestern College

by

Donna Bradley

This dissertation has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Education

at Lindenwood University by the School of Education

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Joseph Zlatic, Dissertation Chair

12/06/2022

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Mitch Nasser, Committee Member

December 16, 2022

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Saint Rice, Committee Member

12/5/22  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

Full Legal Name: DONNA BRADLEY

Signature:  Date: 12/15/2022

## **Acknowledgements**

Mission accomplished. It is with great joy that I author these acknowledgements. Dr. David Gerlach, Dr. Dan Wilson, Dr. Janine Peacher, Dr. Tasha Jones, and Marty Earp, you pushed me forward, sometimes annoyingly, when I said, “How about I just call it a second Masters?” You insisted that I was “in too deep” and needed to move forward to completion. My hunger and thirst for knowledge and education I owe to my late parents, Fred and Lorene Osborne. This is your legacy. I am your legacy. To my adult sons, daughters-in-law, and my grandchildren, Dominic and Lisa Griffin, Myron and Tamra Evans, Kyle Evans, Alana Evans, Kayden Evans, Aliyah Evans, Dylan Griffin, and Lincoln Griffin, I am now available for visits, vacations, and holidays. It is my hope that I instilled the value of education in you and that you will pursue your dreams. To my son, David Griffin, who awaits me in heaven, not a day passes when I do not think of you. This is for you. To my sorority sisters of the Delta Sigma Theta’s Springfield Decatur Area Alumnae Chapter and to my Link sisters of the Tri-Country (IL) chapter, your encouragement and prayers were priceless. A special thank you to Sorors, Dr Sherry Mills-Rogers, Dr. Wanda McCoy, Colette McEachin, and Denise Washington from Lambda Iota, the DST chapter that made me. For over 40 years we have supported one another’s madness. Finally, to my dissertation committee, Dr. Joseph Zlatic, chair, Dr. Mitch Nasser, and Dr. Saint Rice, thank you for your support, assistance, and encouragement. I shall forever remember your service.



## **Abstract**

It is well-known that higher education faces the challenge of declining enrollment, particularly post-COVID. However, there is a population of students that higher education institutions may overlook, returning citizens and ex-offenders. Reintegration is a challenging endeavor for returning citizens and ex-offenders, without regard to the length of incarceration or the circumstances surrounding system-involvement. They face barriers and stigmatization while attempting to achieve some sense of normalization post-incarceration, including the pursuit of higher education. Using mixed methodology, specifically a qualitative case study and descriptive statistics, the extant research examined the college admission process for returning citizens and ex-offenders through the lens of three groups, admissions professionals, residential life employees, and campus safety employees, at a small Midwestern college. The research examined the understanding of the three groups about the college's admissions policy and process for returning citizens and ex-offenders and their experiences with the admissions process. The research also delved into whether the experiences of the three groups in the admissions process for returning citizens or ex-offenders influenced their perspectives of returning citizens and ex-offenders. Finally, the study examined the differences and similarities between the three groups in their perceptions of returning citizens or ex-offenders admitted to the college. The researcher used NVivo 12, a qualitative data analysis software that facilitates organization and visualization of data, to analyze the interview data vertically and horizontally. Ten themes emerged, leading to the conclusion that admissions professionals, residence life employees, and campus safety employees had varying degrees of knowledge and experience related to the college's policies and

practices about the admission of returning citizens and ex-offenders. Without regard to the level of knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions about the policies and practices related to the admission of returning citizens and ex-offenders, the theme of second chances prevailed. The theoretical foundations of the research are university social responsibility, collaborative theory, and critical race theory.

*Keywords:* returning citizens, ex-offenders, college admission process, stigma, barriers, second chance, university social responsibility, collaborative theory, critical race theory

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **Introduction**

Reintegration into society post-incarceration is a challenging process. The use of the term “returning citizen” indicates that words matter. Ex-offenders are individuals with past involvement in the criminal justice system, such as arrest, charges, incarceration, or probation. Though system-involved, the distinction between ex-offenders and returning citizens is the length of the period of incarceration, if any. For example, offenders may engage in conduct resulting in arrest; however, the prosecutor may not charge or may offer a plea bargain that did not result in incarceration. Reentry organizations agree that referring to the population that served prison time as ex-offenders provokes a stigma and creates barriers, while the reference to returning citizens restores dignity and provides second chances (Scott-Clayton, 2017; Thompson, 2017). The literature supports the use and definition of the term “returning citizens” to reduce stigma (Baskaran, 2019; Bowman & Ely, 2020; Cnaan & Woida, 2020; Cohen & Rosenbaum, 2019; Cossyleon & Flores, 2020; Elliott, 2019; Jones, 2016; Snodgrass, 2019; Toussaint, 2016).

Societal views towards ex-offenders and returning citizens are consistent. Because of the involvement in the criminal justice system, similar stigma and negative perceptions befall them. Ex-offenders may not have endured lengthy periods of incarceration like returning citizens. However, the stigma of involvement with the criminal justice system affects them nonetheless (Halkovic & Greene, 2015). There are obstacles and barriers to attainment of the American Dream, including higher education, particularly if decisionmakers, such as employers and higher education institutions, are aware of their status as an ex-offender.

The project explored and compared the perspectives of admissions, campus safety, and residential life personnel of higher education institutions regarding the admission of returning citizens and ex-offenders as these groups strive to achieve successful reentry into society and to overcome barriers created by imprisonment or system-involvement.

Barriers to reintegration, including the college admissions process, impede the ability of formerly incarcerated citizens, whether returning citizens or ex-offenders, to change their lives and attain educational and economic success. Understanding the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders may reveal the purpose of the collection of criminal histories for applicants, the degree of exclusion of returning citizens from the university community, and the experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety officers, and residential life employees with returning citizens and ex-offenders.

The literature examines several aspects of the experiences of returning citizens' and ex-offenders' attempts to pursue higher education, including challenges faced in the admissions process, stigma, legal issues, and barriers to equal access to education (Custer, 2013, 2016; Davies, 2000; Ramaswamy, 2015; Rubenstein et al., 2019). The literature examines experiences and challenges with the college admissions process from the perspective of ex-offenders and returning citizens (Custer, 2013, 2016, 2018). However, research about the perspectives and understanding of admissions professionals and others involved in the admissions process for returning citizens about the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders is sparse. In addition, while the organizational leadership literature explores corporate social responsibility, the concept



of social responsibility in a higher education environment is comparatively recent (Ali et al., 2021; Bastos, et al., 2019; Vasilescu et al., 2010).

Scott-Clayton (2017), in her discussion about a returning citizen's challenges in pursuing a higher education, advocates for policies that look beyond the box, referring to the "Ban the Box" policy. The subject of her research began her educational journey while incarcerated. Ironically, her enrollment in college while incarcerated allowed the educational institution to bypass the criminal record inquiries. Because she was an enrolled student, she did not have to experience the process established for returning citizens and ex-offenders not previously enrolled while incarcerated.

According to Davies (2000), the practice of soliciting information about the criminal history of applicants began in the 1990's after a series of lawsuits related to college and university liability when returning citizen or ex-offender students committed crimes after admission. Davies (2000) analyzes issues about "contractual and tortious duties, rehabilitation of offenders, human rights, and data protection" (p. 143). The researcher does not draw conclusions, but provides an objective analysis on each issue. Even so, he acknowledges that education is a key factor to the reduction of recidivism.

Since then, a movement, Ban the Box, emerged (O'Neill, 2012). The Ban the Box movement advocates for removal of inquiries about criminal history from applications. Proponents of banning the box contend that research does not support the assertion that identifying those with criminal histories, such as returning citizens and ex-offenders, increases campus safety (Jung, 2015; O'Neill, 2012). To the contrary, the effect on campus safety does not offset the stigma that results when returning citizens or ex-offenders check the box acknowledging previous or perceived criminal histories, but

increases negative perceptions and attitudes towards those who experience interaction with the criminal justice system (Jung, 2015; O'Neill, 2012). The box creates yet another barrier to successful reintegration.

Halkovic and Greene (2015) conducted a participatory action research project, seeking knowledge about students with criminal records on college campuses. The researchers identify post-incarceration education of offenders as a gap in the literature. The article addresses the stigma carried by returning citizens and benefits of the inclusion of criminal offenders in the university community, recommending the creation of a hospitable campus environment. Although offenders serve prison sentences as retribution for crimes committed, the criminal conviction assigns a stigma that impedes the reintegration process. Contrary to societal views about criminal offenders, which attach stigma, the researchers identified themes characterized as gifts, such as the deconstruction of the preconceived notions, societally assigned, because of their criminal experience. According to Halkovic and Greene (2015), their research deflated campus safety concerns regarding returning citizens.

Rubenstein et al. (2019) examined stigma related to college admissions as it relates to sex offenders. The researchers indicate that the stereotypes and misinformation about the level of recidivism among sex offenders exasperates the college admissions process even more. According to this study, the ability to attain a higher education among sex offenders is a factor that lowers recidivism.

In addition to stigma, barriers also include housing, employment, food insecurity, and the pursuit of higher education (Ramaswamy, 2015; Rubenstein, et al., 2019).

Ramaswamy (2015) conducted a legal analysis, which addresses the disproportionate

impact of the barriers to education on minority populations. In doing so, the researcher noted that access to higher education is critical to the success of returning citizens and ex-offenders. Removing the barriers, or at the very least, minimizing the barriers, facilitates reentry in ways that maximize a successful transition. Ramaswamy (2015) further noted that there is no educational benefit to the examination of the criminal histories of applicants.

O'Reilly (2014) conducted research demonstrating that the barriers to education and its impact on the ability of returning citizens and ex-offenders to obtain viable employment is not unique to the United States. Her research involves offenders in Ireland who seek to reintegrate into society post-incarceration, even where Irish prison policy requires the provision of education while incarcerated. The nexus between education and employment is well-settled. The inability to obtain employment because of the lack of education, leads to food and housing insecurity. When criminal histories prevent further pursuit of educational opportunities, which affects the ability to obtain jobs that pay living wages, it interferes with the growth and progress needed for successful reintegration.

While social justice advocates and policy makers made progress in addressing visible barriers, invisible barriers still exist, such as stigma and preconceived notions about previously incarcerated persons (Couloute, 2018). Higher education institutions are no exception. The Ban the Box movement initially focused on removing barriers to employment. Some cities and states now prohibit discrimination against returning citizens. However, higher education has not addressed the issue. Most colleges and universities still inquire about criminal convictions on the admissions application and

follow extended admissions process for applicants with criminal convictions. Research shows a strong correlation between education and recidivism (Baer et al., 2006; Custer, 2013; Custer, 2016; Custer, 2018). The higher the level of education, the lower the recidivism.

Despite the strong connection between education and recidivism, higher education institutions continue to collect information related to the criminal histories of its applicants. According to a report by the Center for Community Alternatives (Weismann et al., 2010), college and universities report no impact on campus safety, because of gathering criminal history data. In its report, the Center for Community Alternatives, like Ramaswamy (2015) addresses the racial disparity and discriminatory impact of the use of criminal histories in the admissions process, characterizing the issue as a civil rights problem. The organization recommends the elimination of the practice and discusses alternative solutions to address issues of campus safety.

It is also important to examine the efforts of returning citizens and ex-offenders to attain a higher education considering critical theory, a theoretical concept that focuses on social inequalities and the lack of equity for underserved and marginalized populations. According to Bartlett and Vavrus (2017), critical theory addresses societal inequalities and examines disparities caused by the development of structures and processes (p. 39). Currently, a prevailing societal issue concerns the acknowledgement and examination of systemic structures and processes that result in stigma, disparities, and inequities, primarily toward African Americans, who are grossly overrepresented in the criminal justice system. Thirty eight percent of the prison population under the purview of the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) are African American, while the United States

population is 13% African American (Federal Bureau of Prisons, 2022). The Prison Policy Initiative reports that 30% of those under probation or parole supervision are African American and the incarceration rate for African Americans is 2,306 per 100,000, as compared to the incarceration rate of White Americans, which is 430 per 100,000 (Prison Policy Initiative, 2022). According to The Sentencing Project, incarceration in the United States increased by 500% over a 40-year period (Mendel et al, 2022).

The relevance of the statistics related to the incarceration of African Americans to the current study is the disparate impact on the African American population of the efforts to achieve a higher education where criminal justice policies, systems, and structures impede their progress systemically. African Americans systemically imposed collateral consequences stemming from slavery to slave codes, Jim Crow, and the War on Drugs, the latter which increased incarceration in the United States through ostensibly unintended consequences. Nonetheless, the consequences, whether intended or unintended, impacted communities of color disparately, as demonstrated by the findings of the 2021 Sentencing Project Report:

1. State prisons house Black Americans at nearly 5 times the rate of White Americans.
2. Nationally, one in 81 Black adults in the U.S. is serving time in state prison. Wisconsin leads the nation in Black imprisonment rates; one of every 36 Black Wisconsinites is in prison.
3. In 12 states, more than half the prison population is Black: Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.

4. Seven states maintain a Black/White disparity larger than 9 to 1: California, Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Wisconsin.
5. States incarcerate Latinx individuals at a rate that is 1.4 times the incarceration rate of Whites. Ethnic disparities are highest in Massachusetts, which reports an ethnic differential of 4.1:1, Connecticut (3.9:1), Pennsylvania (3.3:1), and New York (3.1:1). (Nellis & Fetting, 2021, p. 3)

With the racial disparities in federal and state incarceration rates, it logically follows that the stigma, barriers, and obstacles to attaining a higher education affects African Americans disparately. Therefore, the theoretical framework includes a discussion of critical theory.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to gain insight into the admissions process and policy for returning citizen and ex-offender applicants by conducting a case study exploring the experiences and understanding of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees at the small, private Midwestern college about the admissions policy and process for returning citizens and ex-offenders. According to Goodrick (2014), case studies are effective when comparing policies or processes within and across contexts. In the study, the admission process and policies were studied across contexts by exploring the perspectives about and experiences of three groups with returning citizens and ex-offenders.

The researcher identified and described the application process and the policy for returning citizen and ex-offender applicants on all campuses. In the current study, the researcher conducted interviews with 12 admissions professionals, campus safety, and

residential life employees to learn about their experiences and understanding of the policy, the process, and to discern returning citizen and ex-offender experiences through their eyes. The college, the academic community at large, the community, returning citizens, and ex-offenders will benefit from the results of the study. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with study participants to gain knowledge about their understanding and experiences related to the admissions of returning citizens and ex-offenders. The interviews sought to gain knowledge about admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees' understanding of the admissions policy related to returning citizens and ex-offenders, if any. The researcher collected and analyzed descriptive statistics, such as available institutional data regarding admission rates, the numbers of ex-offenders admitted, and the outcome of the admissions process for the returning citizen and ex-offender applicants.

Finally, the community, returning citizens, and ex-offenders will benefit from the research, primarily because the literature reports that the higher the educational level, the lower recidivism (Sokoloff & Schenck-Fontaine, 2017). If colleges and universities have an effective admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders and consider "Banning the Box," communities are safer (Jung, 2017). The overall impact of the study is the important contribution of higher education institutions' social responsibility to increase public safety by adding the value of education to returning citizens' and ex-offenders' lives, especially when considering the research about the correlation between education and recidivism (Jorge & Pena, 2017).

As a result of the study, colleges and universities can examine their admissions processes and adjust, if needed, based upon the literature and the results of the study.

Doing so would demonstrate the university's desire to enhance diversity, strive for social justice, and serve traditionally marginalized populations. In addition, higher education institutions can demonstrate university social responsibility and build collaborative relationships between the college, social service agencies, the community, law enforcement, courts, and corrections.

The study used a mixed methods approach, specifically, a case study method, and the analysis of descriptive statistics to conduct an exploration of the experiences and understanding among the admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees (Merriam, 1998; Barlett & Vavrus, 2017). Case studies are an accepted methodology to accomplish the purpose of this exploration of organizational policies and processes. The case study approach is indicative of the interpretive research philosophy, which contends that researchers gain new knowledge by "understanding processes, shared place, purpose, or identity" (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p. 39). The proposed study seeks to understand the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders. The study further endeavors to gain knowledge about the sample population's understanding of their place, purpose, and identity in the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders.

The case study is a process-oriented approach (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Denzin, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The research design is emergent, exploring pertinent factors, actors, features, and the historical and contemporary processes producing a sense of shared place, purpose, or identity (Barlett & Vavrus, 2017, p. 19). This research seeks to explore the admissions process for returning citizens



and ex-offenders and shared experiences and perspectives of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees about the process.

Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) further note that case studies focus on critical theory, addressing societal inequalities and examining disparities caused by the development of structures and processes (p. 39). The proposed case study makes horizontal, vertical, and transversal comparisons between admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees' experiences and perspectives.

To accomplish the purposes of this research, the researcher recruited a sample population of 10-12 admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life involved in all aspects of the admissions processing of applications and the integration of traditional, graduate, and non-traditional student admission to the university. At its full capacity, there were 30 admissions professionals and others involved in the admissions process for returning citizens. The President of the small, private college and the Vice President of Student Affairs approved this research. Data collection ceased once the researcher achieved saturation. Guest et al. (2020) operationalized saturation as a method of determining sample size in qualitative research. Though the researchers reimagined the methods by using a quantitative method to determine qualitative sample sizes, ultimately the determination of saturation remains unchanged, that is, at what point is no new information available.

In the current research, at maximum capacity, there were only 30 employees at the small, private Midwestern college that worked as admissions professionals, campus safety employees, and residential life employees. The sample size of 12 is almost half of the maximum employees in the relevant classifications. After interviewing the 12

employees, four in each classification, the participants provided no new information, thus reaching saturation.

The researcher used the following secondary data to inform the research: student population size, including undergraduate, graduate, and non-traditional students, university student demographics, application forms from 2004 and 2021, number of returning citizen and ex-offender applicants, number of returning citizen or ex-offender applicants admitted/denied, and past and present university admissions policy for returning citizens and ex-offenders. Data was readily accessible and publicly available regarding the student population size and demographics. Prior to conducting the research, the researcher was not aware of whether the college maintained data related to returning citizen or ex-offender applicants or whether a written policy, as opposed to a practice existed. The research revealed that the admissions office kept an Excel spreadsheet with information about returning citizen and ex-offender applicants, such as name, date of application, and the admission results. As discussed in Chapter Four, research also revealed the absence of a formal written policy. The researcher discusses the implications of the data in Chapter Five.

The interview questions are attached. Except for preliminary questions which solicited information and descriptive statistics about the participants' demographics, tenure, and experience, the inquiries are open-ended questions which allowed participants to expand upon thoughts and enabled the researcher to gain knowledge, sometimes beyond that sought. Remler and Ryzin (2015) provided guidance for conducting qualitative interviews, stating that open-ended questions seek in-depth, detailed responses using participants' words (p. 67). The interview questions are a guide rather than a script.

The researcher used probing questions to advance the conversation and to solicit further information from the participant, for example, “tell me more about that.”

### **Rationale of the Study**

Returning citizens and ex-offenders face a plethora of challenges, among which is lack of access to education (Baer et al., 2006; Custer, 2013; Custer, 2016; Custer, 2018). The study contributes to the body of literature about college admissions, returning citizens, and ex-offenders and explores the College’s admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders and their experiences through the eyes of admissions, campus safety, and residential life employees. Research shows that education lowers the risk of offender recidivism (Sokoloff & Schenck-Fontaine, 2017; Stewart & Uggen, 2018). For that reason, attaining a higher level of education is critical for the success of the offender and contributes to public safety of campuses and communities, because the offender is less likely to recidivate (Custer, 2018; Vacca, 2004).

There may be legal implications with the admissions of returning citizens and ex-offenders, such as contentions of negligent admissions if the returning citizen or ex-offender compromises campus safety (Custer, 2016; Pierce et al., 2014). Data protection and allegations of discrimination, considering the guidance of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regarding the exclusion of returning citizen and ex-offender employment opportunities, also present possible legal issues for higher education institutions. However, it is important to understand the experiences of professionals involved in the admissions process and the way that they use information about criminal convictions (Davies, 2000). Doing so may contribute to the diminishment of disparities created by structures, policies, and processes.

Exploration of the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders at a small, private Midwestern college may reveal any misinformation, misunderstandings, impediments, challenges, and successes, enabling the college to clarify or refine the process, if necessary. Further, the implications for practitioners in higher education admissions in a broader sense pertain to the theory of social responsibility and the contribution of institutions of higher education thereto. The effectiveness of collaboration between institutions of higher education and the community; i.e., collaborative theory, is another significant reason for this study (McGarry & Ney, 2006; Roberts & Bradley, 1991; Wood & Gray, 1991).

The university can use the results of the study to reevaluate its admissions policies and processes for returning citizens and ex-offenders. The theoretical framework, university social responsibility and collaborative theory, may motivate the university and admissions to change the perspective on returning citizens, depending upon the literature and results of the study, expand recruitment efforts, and increase collaborative relationships.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with study participants to gain knowledge about their understanding, experiences, and perspectives related to the admission of returning citizens. The interviews sought to gain knowledge from admissions, campus safety, and residential life employees about the admissions process for returning citizens and their understanding of the admissions policy related to returning citizens and provide insight to colleges and universities to enhance the experience for returning citizen applicants, create consistency in the process between campuses, and potentially increase enrollment. The results of the study may allow admissions

professionals to expand outreach and recruitment efforts beyond traditional efforts and to refine the policy and processes for admissions of the returning citizen population.

Finally, the community and returning citizens will benefit from the research, primarily because the literature reports that the higher the educational level, the lower recidivism (Sokoloff & Schenck-Fontaine, 2017). If colleges and universities have an effective admissions process for returning citizens, considering “Banning the Box,” the communities are safer (Jung, 2017). The overall impact of the study is the important contribution of higher education institutions’ social responsibility to increase public safety by adding the value of education to returning citizens’ lives, especially when considering the research about the correlation between education and recidivism (Jorge & Pena, 2017). As a result of the study, the university can examine the admissions process and adjust, if needed, based upon the literature and the result of the study. Using a qualitative approach, specifically, case study, the common, shared, and lived experiences among the admissions, campus safety, and residential life employees regarding their interaction with returning citizens in the admissions and campus integration process were identified (Butin, 2010; Creswell, 2012).

### **Research Questions**

**Research Question 1:** What is the understanding of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees about the university admissions policy and process for returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 2:** What are the experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees involved with the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 3:** How do the experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees influence their perspectives and attitudes towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 4:** What are the differences, similarities, or patterns between the experiences, understanding, and perspectives of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees about and towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?

### **Study Limitations**

The researcher identified several limitations to the study, including the tenure of study participants, the lack of knowledge about the admissions process, the lack of involvement in the admissions process, and absence of clear policy related to the admission of ex-offenders and returning citizens. In addition, the current research did not explore the reasons that study participants voiced negative concerns related to sex-related offenses as compared to other criminal offenses.

The sample population comprised admissions professionals (4), campus safety (4) employees, and residential life employees (4) at a small, private Midwestern college. The tenure of the participants, ranged from less than a year to 38 years. Of the 12 study participants, four participants worked at the college for less than one year, three participants were employed at the college for two, to two and a half years, two participants were employed for three to four years, one for 10 years, one for 23 years, and one for 38 years. The relationship between tenure of the study participant and their knowledge or lack of knowledge about the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders is discussed in Chapter Five.

The lack of involvement in the admissions process was also a notable limitation. The only classification of college employee in the sample that had direct involvement in the policies and practices related to the admission of returning citizens and ex-offenders were the admissions professionals. The only exception was the one residential life employee with the longest tenure, the Dean of Students. The lack of involvement of the other classifications of employees in the policies and practices related to the admission of returning citizens and ex-offenders resulted in a lack of the rich data that the researcher hoped to gather related to the topic of the study, also discussed in Chapter Five.

In addition, because of the high turnover in campus safety, residential life, and admissions, the lack of experience of study participants is reflected in the data. Nine of the 12 study participants worked at the college for less than five years. Of the nine, four were employed in their various capacities for less than one year. The limitation of time in the position is also discussed as a limitation of the study in Chapter Five.

Finally, a limitation and recommendation for future research involves the selection of one institution in this case study. While there is value to the case study that explores the perspectives and experiences of the three classifications of employees within one institution, a comparative case study involving more than one institution might offer deeper insight and result in a study with greater generalizability.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Admissions Process:** For purposes of this research, the admissions process includes the steps required by the university for the admission of general applicants and any additional steps required for returning citizen and ex-offender applicants.

**Admissions professionals:** Persons involved in the admissions process involving returning citizens and ex-offenders, including admissions, residential life, and campus safety representatives.

**Ban the Box:** Ban the Box refers to a campaign initiated in 2004 by All of Us or None, an advocacy group for criminal offenders. The goal of the campaign was to minimize the consequences of criminal backgrounds when seeking employment, which was the initial focus, by eliminating the question about criminal background from employment applications to create equal opportunity consideration (About Ban the Box, n.d.; O'Neill, 2012). In this study, Ban the Box refers to removal of the criminal background question for purposes of admission to a higher education institution, as a social justice issue (Custer, 2018; Jung, 2017).

**Common Application:** Also referred to as CA or Common App, it is a voluntary, nonprofit membership organization in the United States, CA, which started in 1975, provides a common admissions application that students may submit to any institution that is a member of CA. The organization helps the students reduce the time they need to spend in applying to college and enables them to spend more of their time with their schoolwork and activities in their senior year (Ehrenberg & Liu, 2009).

**Ex-offenders** are individuals with past involvement in the criminal justice system, such as arrest, charges, incarceration, or probation. Though system-involved, the distinction between ex-offenders and returning citizens is the length of the period of incarceration, if any. For example, offenders may engage in conduct resulting in arrest; however, the prosecutor may not charge or offers a plea bargain that did not result in incarceration.

**Returning citizens** are people returning from incarceration and seeking reintegration into society (Trulear, 2011).



**Summary**

In sum, it is important to understand the challenges, barriers, and obstacles returning citizens and ex-offenders face and must overcome to obtain higher education. The purpose of the study was to gain insight into the admissions process for returning citizen applicants by conducting a case study examining the experiences, perspectives, and understanding of admissions, campus safety, and residential life employees at a small, private Midwestern college about the admissions policy and process for returning citizens. A review of the literature, the methodology, analysis of the data, and report of the results follow.

## **Chapter Two: Review of Literature**

Chapter One introduced the challenges facing returning citizens and ex-offenders when seeking reentry into society, including the pursuit of a higher education. Chapter Two includes a review of the literature and identification of themes in the literature concerning issues surrounding reentry of returning citizens and ex-offenders, the impediments, barriers, and challenges that the population faces when attempting to resume their lives. The literature review also includes a summary of the research related to policy, specifically the Ban the Box movement advocating for the removal of questions related to criminal history.

The literature examines several aspects of the experiences of returning citizens' and ex-offenders' attempts to pursue higher education, the challenges faced in the admissions process, stigma, the resulting barriers to equal access to education, and legal implications (Custer, 2013; Custer, 2016; Davies, 2000; Ramaswamy, 2015; Rubenstein, et al., 2019). However, research about the perspectives and understanding of admissions, residence life, and campus safety employees about returning citizens and ex-offenders relating to the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders is sparse. In addition, while the literature explores corporate social responsibility, the concept of social responsibility in a higher education environment is comparatively recent.

### **History and Policy**

College students and the communities where the institutions are located generally considered the college campuses as relatively safe places. As the public became more aware of well-known campus-connected crimes, such as the murder of Jeanne Clery and the crimes on or near college campuses committed by the infamous Ted Bundy, there was

an outcry related to campus safety. Jacobsen (2017) conducted research to examine the influence of institutional factors on campus crime. The researcher noted that the murder of college student, Jeanne Clery, triggered concern for safety on college campuses nationwide. As a result of Clery's murder in her dorm room, her parents advocated and lobbied for the passage of the Clery Act of 1990, which requires colleges and universities to report crimes on campus annually. According to Jacobsen (2017), the fear of crime on college campuses is largely unwarranted given that campuses are safer spaces than the communities surrounding them. The Campus Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990, known as the Clery Act, focuses on altering the conduct of institutions and the way that colleges and universities respond to crime on campus. The concept is that individual exposure to crime is minimized if the university is transparent in its reporting. Interestingly, the focus of the Clery Act is not on the alleged criminal, the returning citizen, or the ex-offender but rather the focus is on the responsibility of the institution.

Azevedo et al. (2022) conducted research revealing consistency with Jacobsen (2017) about the perception of crime resulting in a "subjective insecurity" among students about campus safety. Azevedo et al. (2022) distinguishes between subjective insecurity and objective insecurity, observing that subjective insecurity is based on perceptions, while objective insecurity is based upon facts. However, Collins (2016) contends that the research is inconsistent regarding the fear of crime. Nonetheless, neither Azevedo et al. (2022) nor Collins (2016) take a position on whether criminal background checks should continue, whether in higher education or other areas of potential disparity, such as employment and housing. Their research focuses solely on the perception of crime vs. the reality of crime on college campuses. The research is of interest in light of

the literature surrounding the lack of correlation between the admission of returning citizens and ex-offenders and campus safety (Center for Community Alternatives, 2010; Ramaswamy, 2015).

In October 2000, Congress passed the Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act (CSCPA). CSCPA, Section 170101 of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, went into effect on October 25, 2002, requiring sex offenders to notify the higher education institution if they enrolled, worked, or volunteered on a college campus. The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 also contains the Wetterling Act, legislation that implemented sex offender registration for individuals convicted of a criminal offense against a minor, a sexually violent offense, or a person considered a sexual predator. It is important to note that the Wetterling Act of 1994 focused on crimes against children. Megan's Law, the first amendment to the Wetterling Act, passed in 1996. Megan's Law expanded the registration requirement mandated by the Wetterling Act to a requirement for states to develop notification systems and public access to any information about sex offenders in the community. Though the Wetterling Act and Megan's Law did not specifically relate to college campuses, Congress' passage of the legislation evolved to the requirement for sex offenders to notify campus safety and security if enrolled, working, or volunteering on campus. The focus was solely on sex offenders rather than individuals involved in the criminal justice system in general.

According to Davies (2000), the practice of soliciting information about the criminal history of applicants began in the 1990's after a series of lawsuits related to college and university liability when returning citizen or ex-offender students committed crimes after admission. Davies (2000) analyzes issues about "contractual and tortious

duties, rehabilitation of offenders, human rights, and data protection” (p. 143). The researcher does not draw conclusions but provides an objective analysis on each issue. Even so, he acknowledges that education is a key factor to the reduction of recidivism.

In 2013, the Congress amended the Clery Act in its reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which includes the Campus Sexual Assault Victims’ Bill of Rights, an amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1965. Colleges and universities that receive federal funding are required to gather and retain statistics and policies and procedures relating to crimes, such as sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. The legislation also required institutions of higher learning to provide prevention training to students, faculty, and staff.

Since then, a movement, Ban the Box expanded and became well-known among policy makers (O’Neill, 2012). According to the Ban the Box Campaign (n.d.), a national civil rights movement comprised of returning citizens, ex-offenders, and their families, All of Us or None, started the movement in 2004. The catalyst for the Ban the Box movement was employment and housing discrimination experienced by returning citizens and ex-offenders, creating severe barriers to societal reintegration. The Ban the Box movement broadened its focus and now advocates for removal of inquiries about criminal history from college applications.

Proponents of banning the box contend that research does not support the assertion that identifying those with criminal histories, such as returning citizens and ex-offenders, increases campus safety. To the contrary, the effect on campus safety does not offset the stigma that results when returning citizens or ex-offenders check the box acknowledging previous or perceived criminal histories, but instead increases negative

perceptions and attitudes towards those who experience interaction with the criminal justice system. The box creates yet another barrier to successful reintegration (O'Neill, 2012).

The Ban the Box movement initially focused on removing barriers to employment and housing. Because of the movement's effective advocacy, some cities and states prohibit discrimination in employment and housing against returning citizens and ex-offenders. However, higher education has not effectively addressed the issue. Most colleges and universities continue to inquire about criminal convictions on the admissions application and follow extended admissions process for applicants with criminal convictions. Research shows a strong correlation between education and recidivism (Baer, et al., 2006; Custer, 2013, 2016, 2018). The higher the level of education, the lower the recidivism.

Custer (2018) conducted a comparative analysis of university admissions for ex-offenders in the United States and the United Kingdom. He discussed university policies that require disclosure of criminal histories and the social movement, Ban the Box, which seeks to remove the criminal history barrier for ex-offenders who want to pursue higher education. In his qualitative study, Custer (2018) identified themes. The researcher-identified themes included the criminal records law, the university admissions policies, including the logic, the history, and the language, and the admissions data. After conducting an analysis, Custer (2018) concluded that universities should modify or abandon the policies requiring disclosure of criminal history. Higher education institutions should Ban the Box requesting information about criminal history of college applicants.

Recognizing the challenges ex-offenders and returning citizens face with post-release societal integration, in 2008, under the Bush Administration, Congress passed the Second Chance Act (SCA). The SCA, whose purpose is to facilitate ex-offender and returning citizen reentry into society by helping them to reconnect with their families and build a productive life using evidence-based practices with the intended result of reducing recidivism, only covers federal offenders though most offenders in the United States are state-level offenders. Therefore, state-level offenders do not benefit from the legislation (Whetzel & McGrath, 2019). The SCA covers emergency services and services related to the transition of ex-offenders and returning citizens into society post-release. Identifying criminogenic needs, such as cognitions, social networks, alcohol/drugs, and employment/education, is an essential component of the transition. Implementation includes addressing responsivity factors, such as violence, homelessness, transportation, reading/writing limitations, handicaps, and childcare concerns.

Whetzel et al (2019) examined the progress and implementation challenges of the SCA since its enactment. The researchers addressed issues with the initial implementation and noted disparities, with inconsistencies in the court system's use of SCA funding. The purpose of the article was to provide recommendations to courts for the use of SCA funding. Although the SCA identifies employment and education as a criminogenic need, the legislation does not provide funding for education. The legislation provides funding for job readiness, job training, subsidized on-the-job training, employment tools, and equipment and licensure. The only education recommended by the authors involved increasing the knowledge of staff about the SCA's potential to

improve community safety and to positively influence the lives of ex-offenders and returning citizens.

### **Criminal History: Stigma and Barriers**

While social justice advocates and policy makers made progress in addressing visible barriers, invisible barriers still exist, such as stigma and preconceived notions about previously incarcerated persons (Couloute, 2018). Higher education institutions are no exception. Returning citizens and ex-offenders face the same types of challenges in their efforts to attain college degrees as they do when trying to reintegrate into society.

Rubenstein et al. (2019) examined stigma related to college admissions as it relates to sex offenders. The researchers indicate that the stereotypes and misinformation about the level of recidivism among sex offenders exasperates the college admissions process even more. According to Rubenstein et al. (2019), like other offenders, the ability to attain a higher education among sex offenders is a factor that lowers recidivism. Societal attachment of stigma exasperates extant barriers to the pursuit of higher education for returning citizens and ex-offenders.

Halkovic and Greene (2015) conducted a participatory action research project, seeking knowledge about students with criminal records on college campuses. The researchers identify post-incarceration education of offenders as a gap in the literature. The article addresses the stigma carried by returning citizens and benefits of the inclusion of criminal offenders in the university community, recommending the creation of a hospitable campus environment. Although offenders serve prison sentences as retribution from crimes committed, the criminal conviction assigns a stigma that impedes the reintegration process (Halkovic & Greene, 2015). Contrary to societal views about



criminal offenders, which attach stigma, the researchers identified themes characterized as gifts, such as the deconstruction of the preconceived notions, societally assigned because of their criminal experience. According to Halkovic & Greene (2015), their research deflated campus safety concerns regarding returning citizens.

In addition to stigma, barriers also include housing, employment, food insecurity, and the pursuit of higher education (Ramaswamy, 2015; Rubenstein, et al., 2019). Ramaswamy (2015) conducted a legal analysis which addresses the disproportionate impact of the barriers to education on minority populations. In doing so, the researcher noted that access to higher education is critical to the success of returning citizens and ex-offenders. Removing the barriers, or at the very least, minimizing the barriers, facilitates reentry in ways that maximize a successful transition. Ramaswamy (2015) further notes that there is no educational benefit to the examination of the criminal histories of applicants.

O'Reilly (2014) conducted research demonstrating that the barriers to education and its impact on the ability of returning citizens and ex-offenders to obtain viable employment is not unique to the United States. Her research involves offenders in Ireland who seek to reintegrate into society post-incarceration, even where Irish prison policy requires the provision on education while incarcerated. The nexus between education and employment is well-settled. The inability to obtain employment because of the lack of education, lead to food and housing insecurity. When criminal histories prevent further pursuit of educational opportunities, which affects the ability to obtain jobs that pay living wages, it interferes with the growth and progress needed for successful reintegration.

Cossyleon and Flores (2020) conducted an ethnographical study, examining the involvement of returning citizens in a social movement, specifically Fighting to Overcome Records and Create Equality (FORCE). FORCE is a movement created and led by formerly incarcerated persons. They partnered with Community Renewal Society (CRS) to change law and policy. The study, unlike most in the literature, considered low income, marginalized populations involved in social movements.

The researchers found that study participants developed social capital and a sense of belonging because of their involvement in FORCE. There is extensive discussion about the social, economic, and personal consequences of incarceration, including exclusion from available opportunities and stigma. Interestingly, the researchers note that the exclusion is the result of returning citizens' involvement in formal and informal legal and social practices, i.e., the criminal justice system and post-incarceration stigmatization.

Society stigmatizes ex-offenders and returning citizens, impeding successful reintegration into society. In addition to socioeconomic stigma and the legalized consequences of incarceration, such as loss of the right to vote, denial of public assistance for food, and housing insecurity, ex-offenders and returning citizens face health disparities. Tyler and Brockmann (2017) discussed the role of public policy in stigmatizing ex-offenders and returning citizens and make policy recommendations to address the stigma related to race, mental health, drug addiction, the impact on the system-involved and their families. The researchers recommended policy reform in the treatment of mental health, sentencing, recidivism, Ban the Box legislation, and collateral consequences.

**Legal Implications**

There may be legal implications with the admissions of returning citizens and ex-offenders, such as allegations of negligent admissions if the returning citizen or ex-offender compromises campus safety (Custer, 2016; Pierce, et al., 2014). Data protection and allegations of discrimination, considering the guidance of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (2012) regarding the exclusion of returning citizen and ex-offender employment opportunities, also present possible legal issues for higher education institutions. However, it is important to understand the experiences of professionals involved in the admissions process and the way that they use information about criminal convictions (Davies, 2000). Doing so may contribute to the diminishment of disparities created by structures, policies, and processes.

Using audit methodology and a quantitative data analysis, Stewart and Uggen (2020) collected data showing that 72% of colleges and universities inquire about criminal histories during the admissions process. The researchers selected the audit study method because of its use in discrimination research, typically in studies addressing housing discrimination. Theoretically, returning citizens and ex-offenders could sue a college or university for discrimination, given the guidance of the Equal Employment Opportunity Council (EEOC). The EEOC cautions employers about potential disparate treatment or disparate impact lawsuits because of the use of arrest and conviction records. EEOC issued the guidance because of the large percentage of black males incarcerated in America's prisons (EEOC, 2012; Sugle, 2017).

Colleges and universities are legally obligated to provide a safe environment for students. The failure to do so may result in a negligence lawsuit. Such litigation typically

surrounds issues related to the institution's property, i.e., the failure to provide sufficient lighting. However, victims of campus crimes could assert that the institution is responsible for negligent admissions. For example, if the college admits a known sex-offender who rapes a student, the victim could potentially bring a civil lawsuit alleging that the institution failed to meet its standard of care and, as a result, is negligent. In that regard, Jeanne Clery's family filed and settled a civil lawsuit against Lehigh University, the institution where a student raped and murdered Clery. The Clery's lawsuit did not involve allegations of negligent admissions but rather allegations that the college failed to take necessary precautions to ensure that the dormitory was secured and that the college knew of safety issues but failed to involve the college community.

Adolf (2012) analyzed the potential legal exposure of colleges and universities related to campus safety. The researcher's findings indicate that colleges and universities should consider potential legal action related to contracts, negligence, and landlord-tenant issues in decision-making about campus safety. The researcher's recommendation that higher education institutions focus on three areas, contracts, negligence, and landlord-tenant issues is consistent with the literature that focuses primarily on institutions' legal obligations related to property. Adolf discusses negligent hiring but does not mention negligent admissions.

Other than the responsibility of colleges and universities to provide a safe physical environment, the legal cases related to negligence of higher education institutions focus primarily on negligence as it relates to the institutions' responsibilities under Title IX. In *Estate of Karlie Hall v. Millersville University, et al.* (2022) involved allegations of failure to follow Title IX policies, demonstrating deliberate indifference

toward the safety of the student. In 2015, the boyfriend of a victim of sexual harassment, who was not a student, murdered his girlfriend, a Millersville University student. The university contended that they were not responsible for the conduct of a non-student. Upon appeal, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit Court disagreed. The court's decision widened college and university responsibility under Title IX. However, the case did not address any issues related to a higher education institution's admission of a returning citizen or ex-offender that resulted in criminal activity on campus.

*Diorio v. Harry* (2022) and *K. L. v. Rutgers* (2022) are like the *Hall* case. In both cases, the issue was whether the institution displayed deliberate indifference and therefore, negligence, in addressing Title IX sexual harassment issues, resulting in harm to the student victim. *Like Hall*, there are no allegations that the institutions in *Diorio v. Harry* (2022) or *K. L. v. Rutgers* (2022) were liable for negligent admissions. Rather, the plaintiffs contended that the institutions did not fulfill its obligations under Title IX.

### **Correlation between Criminal Involvement and Education Level**

Despite the strong connection between education and recidivism, higher education institutions continue to collect information related to the criminal histories of its applicants. According to a report by the Center for Community Alternatives (2010), college and universities report no impact on campus safety because of gathering criminal history data. In its report, the Center for Community Alternatives, like Ramaswamy (2015) addresses the racial disparity and discriminatory impact of the use of criminal histories in the admissions process, characterizing the issue as a civil rights problem. The organization recommends the elimination of the practice and discusses alternative solutions to address issues of campus safety.

Halkovic and Greene (2015) review a plethora of research confirming the correlation between education level and criminal involvement, positing that the higher the educational level, the lower recidivism. Despite strong peer-reviewed support, colleges and universities continue to focus on the negative characteristics of ex-offenders rather than viewing the population as contributing positively to the higher education community.

Returning citizens and ex-offenders face a plethora of challenges, among which is lack of access to education (Baer, et al., 2006; Custer, 2013; Custer, 2016; Custer, 2018). Research shows that education lowers the risk of offender recidivism (Sokoloff & Schenck-Fontaine, 2017; Stewart & Uggen, 2018). For that reason, attaining a higher level of education is critical for the success of the offender and contributes to public safety of campuses and communities because the offender is less likely to recidivate (Custer, 2018; Vacca; 2004).

Halkovic and Greene (2015) also identify constructive contributions of ex-offenders, such as developing relationship and bridging the gap between institutions of higher learning and the communities, the sharing of personal, real-life experiences that give life to theories in an educational setting and eliminating the myths about stigma attached to incarceration and those previously incarcerated. Research does not support the contention that ex-offenders jeopardize campus safety.

Jung (2017) discusses the consequences and implications to ex-offenders and returning citizens when colleges and universities inquire about criminal history on admissions applications. The research supports the contention that higher levels of education reduce recidivism. Jung (2017) further discussed the minimal impact on

campus safety because of college inquiries about criminal history. Rather, inquiring about criminal history increases stigma and limits opportunities for higher education for the formerly incarcerated. The article also addressed the legal implications for colleges when applicants fail to disclose prior criminal history, providing examples of universities sued by victims for negligent admission of an ex-offender. Jung (2017) recommends a balanced approach that addresses the concerns from those that view the questions about criminal history as limiting access to higher education and those who are concerned about campus safety. The balanced approach recommended is that outlined in the Fair Access to Education Act of 2015, which would remove marijuana-related misdemeanors from the list of offenses that affect eligibility for federal loans, grants, and work study. The bill did not pass.

### **University Social Responsibility**

University Social Responsibility (USR) is a relatively recent theory, lacking substantial theoretical framework (Vallaey, 2013). The changing society, increasingly wrought with social, economic, and political issues, causes questions. Researchers define USR with a consistent focus on addressing societal issues, the significance of the participation of stakeholders, and curricular integration (Chen et al., 2015, Reiser, 2008; Vasilescu et al., 2010). Vasilescu et al. (2010) provides a conceptual framework for university social responsibility, contending that the philanthropy of corporate social responsibility does not effectually encompass the extant need for colleges and universities to address societal concerns (Vasilescu et al., 2010). Researchers note the distinction between responsibility and requirement, positing that an effective model of USR is found when the concepts are deeply engrained in the character and identity of the

institution (Chen et al., 2015). Operative and sustainable USR intrinsically requires collaboration.

Jorge and Pena (2017) conducted a literature review of articles about university social responsibility from 15 academic journals. The articles spanned a 15-year period, ranging from 2000 to 2015. The researchers analyzed the literature to ascertain the emergence of the concept of university social responsibility, to identify gaps in the literature, and to make recommendations for future research. Consistent with Chen et. al (2015), Jorge et al. (2017) recognized that the shift in the societal role of institutions of higher learning necessitates a responsibility to develop curricula that integrates principles of social responsibility in teaching, research, management, and as advocates for community engagement.

Morales et al. (2018) conducted a qualitative study in the business school at a university in Mexico to determine the influence of leadership and governance in USR. The sample population included 211 students, faculty, or administrative employees in the Faculty of Administrative Sciences. The research concluded that leadership and governing bodies are impetus of USR.

Like Vasilescu et al., 2010, Bastos, et al (2019) view USR as distinct from Corporate Social Responsibility. Using qualitative and quantitative methods, the researchers explore stakeholder's perceptions, using the framework established by the Carroll model, specifically economic, ethical, legal, and philanthropic dimensions (p. 28). The sample included coordinators, employees, students, and employees from a public and private university. The research showed that participants are concerned about USR, but view the four dimensions differently. For example, the participants from the public



university, believed that legal obligations and ethical conduct should merge. Public and private university participants have negative perspectives toward the philanthropic dimension of Carroll's model. While Bastos et al. (2019) discussed the importance of collaboration in defining USR, it is not a concept explored in this research because of the focus on the four dimensions of Carroll's model.

Ali, et al. (2021) conducted an analysis of literature about university social responsibility to ascertain the context in which higher education institutions applied the concept of USR and the outcomes. The researchers concluded that universities *must* participate in social responsibility initiatives, particularly from an administrative and policy perspective. Research showed that long-term, stakeholder involvement is critical for universities to address and effectively impact social issues. From a practical standpoint, Ali et al. (2021) posit that the inclusion of curricula that addresses social problems demonstrates university social responsibility. The research further reveals significant differences between corporate social responsibility and university social responsibility.

### **Collaborative Theory**

A review of the literature reveals minimal research about collaborative theory in the criminal justice and higher education environment. There is a plethora of research related to collaboration and partnerships in other disciplines, particularly healthcare. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides collaborative services to assist individuals who are criminal justice system-involved and suffer with substance abuse issues. However, collaborative relationships between the law

enforcement, courts, corrections, and social service agencies are infrequent in the literature.

Gajda (2004) examines collaborative theory in the context of program evaluation. The researcher discusses the importance of establishing collaborative relationships, also referred to as strategic alliances, to accomplish purposes that exceed the abilities of one agency. The issues related to the ability of returning citizens and ex-offenders to pursue higher education requires collaborative partnerships between law enforcement, courts, and corrections agencies. If the goal is to reduce recidivism, higher education and criminal justice agencies should work together, given the research that posits the correlation between higher education and recidivism.

Huang and Brown (2019) focused on collaboration between higher education institutions to strengthen research rather than partnerships between higher education institutions and community agencies. The researchers recognize the benefit of collaboration in higher education, although there is no discussion about the way colleges and universities can develop strategic relationships to address social concerns, as Gajda (2004) did.

Likewise, Lawrence (2017) acknowledges the significance of collaborative leadership, identifying theoretical framework, such as collaborative learning, constructivism, and transformational learning. However, while collaborative leadership is necessary for the formation of effective partnerships, the concept of working together to address a societal issue, such as successful and sustained reentry of returning citizens and ex-offenders is not found in the theoretical framework of the article.

Cropp (2017) provides insight into the effectiveness of law enforcement collaboration with community agencies within the context of the theoretical keystones of collaborative learning and collaborative problem-solving. The research contends that each agency offers a variety of perspectives, skills, resources, and services to affect the lives of the population served. Without collaboration, the agencies individually are unable to holistically address the concerns of offenders or victims. The concept advanced by Cropp (2017) would enable collaboration between higher education institutions, law enforcement, courts, corrections agencies, and communities to contribute to the educational advancement of returning citizens and ex-offenders, reducing recidivism, and producing responsible citizens.

Duffield et al. (2012), like Huang and Brown (2019) addressed collaborative relationship between higher education institutions, acknowledging the sparsity of the research. Although the researcher does not explore partnerships between higher education institutions, criminal justice agencies, and the community, in the case study research, they lay the foundation for the theoretical framework to develop collaborative theory in the context of higher education. Duffield et al. (2012) address the reasons for collaboration and identify the most internal factor as the commonality of goals. Most of the discussion involved the governance model used in building and sustaining the collaborative relationship. Lessons learned included the importance of trust, the ability to accomplish more when working collaboratively, and the creation of a model for other institutions.

### **Critical Race Theory**

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is undoubtedly one of the most misunderstood theories. Educational institutions across the country argue about the inclusion or

exclusion of books, history, and curricula because of varying interpretations of CRT. For purposes of the current study, CRT is a part of the theoretical framework because of its foundation in historical relevance supported by statistical data. It is challenging to omit race from the study of the disparate treatment of returning citizens and ex-offenders in the college admissions process when a significant percentage of the referenced population are African American males.

Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) note that comparative case studies focus on critical theory, addressing societal inequalities and examining disparities caused by the development of structures and processes (p. 39). The current study warrants a discussion of critical theory because based on federal and state incarceration statistics, African Americans are most of the population incarcerated or under the supervision of the criminal justice system in the United States. Therefore, it follows that African Americans comprise most of the population affected by the barriers to reentry, including the admission to institutions of higher education.

Warde (2012) conducted a study examining the disproportionate incarceration of black men in the United States, Canada, and England. The theoretical framework within which the research examines the disproportionality of incarceration of black men in the three countries is critical race theory. Warde (2012) notes that the issue of the disparity in the incarceration of black men is not unique to the United States. According to Warde (2012), critical race theory postulates that, from a historical perspective, racial biases are deeply imbedded, consciously and implicitly, overtly, and covertly because of systemic privilege, which resulted in one system of oppression followed by another; i.e., slavery, slave codes, Jim Crow, and even the criminal justice system as currently structured.

Warde (2012) further posits that the inequities that exist related to equal access to resources and the benefits that result is based on unequal power possessed by the now dominant population, based on race and socioeconomics. Systems established by the dominant population continue to perpetuate the inequities, including the criminal justice system. Warde (2012) contends that though the minority population, poor black men from urban communities are the majority of those affected by the historical imbalance of power in the United States, Canada, and England.

Thompson (2016) also examined the disparity in race related to incarceration in the context of critical race theory. Thompson (2016) studied the school-to-prison pipeline, considering zero tolerance policies in school discipline and the racial disparities in school discipline in the Miami-Dade School System. The researcher discussed the history of race discrimination in the United States and its impact inter-institutionally, intra-institutionally, and interpersonally, concluding that racial inequities resulted in school punishment, creating a school-to-prison pipeline, supporting the conceptualization of critical race theory.

Webb et al. (2020) researched the exoneration of youth offenders using critical race theory as the theoretical framework. To explain the racial disparity in wrongful convictions, Webb et al (2020) posited that the unfortunate history of unequal power structures in the United States based upon race resulted in systemic levels of poverty, lack of education, unemployment, and the destruction of the African American family unit. As a result, racial bias in the United States is consciously or unconsciously a part of the decision-making process that leads to mistaken identity, one of the most prevalent reasons for wrongful convictions.

**Methodology**

The current study used mixed methods, specifically qualitative case study and descriptive statistics, to gain insight from admissions professionals, campus safety employees, and residential life employees about their perspectives and experiences with returning citizens and ex-offenders in the college admissions process. The researcher compared and contrasted the perspectives and experiences of the three groups vertically and horizontally. According to the literature, the selected methodology is appropriate (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Crowe et al., 2011; Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2021).

The exploration of the perceptions and experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety employees, and residential life employees is of cross-disciplinary interest. The study concerns a higher education institution and an exploration of its policies and practices as it relates to the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders. To discern the experience of formerly system-involved individuals in their attempts to further their education, study participants revealed glimpses of the experiences of returning citizens and ex-offenders.

According to Crowe et al. (2011), the case study is a methodology commonly used in law and policy. The current study involves law and policy. It examines the status of the law as it relates to disparate treatment and the existence of barriers, intended or unintended, for returning citizens and ex-offenders in their reintegration into society post-incarceration. The study also explores policies, such as Ban the Box, that advocate for mitigation and minimalization of the impediments to successful reintegration and policies that created some of the barriers to success.

Crowe et al. (2011) provided in-depth insight into the case study as a methodological approach, positing about the utility of case studies when studying particular phenomena or issues in the context of reality, such as policies. This study is particularly interested in the admissions policy as it relates to returning citizens and ex-offenders. The study participants provided insight from their perspectives, perceptions, and experiences that enabled the researcher to gain insight into the real-life views of those involved in the admissions process, the policy implementation, and the practices at the small, Midwestern college beyond that potentially revealed by a simple survey or questionnaire.

Shrestha and Bhattarai (2022) discussed the efficacy of the case study method in agreement with Crowe et al. (2011) about its usefulness as a research methodology. The researchers explored inclusion in education. The foci of their study were female students with visual impairments. Shrestha and Bhattarai (2022) describe inclusion in education as an issue related to access, like the current study. While the focus of the research differs, the intent is the comparable. In essence, the issues surrounding the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders concern access to higher education and the elimination of barriers preventing access. The researchers explored experiences, policy, and practices, like the current research. Thus, there is precedent for the use of case study as a methodology to research phenomena related to policies, practices, and inclusion, or conversely, exclusion.

In addition, researchers use the case study methodology to support the reshaping of policy, program development, and interventions with empirical research (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Reyes-Quilodran et al., 2017). Reyes-Quilodran et al. (2017) conducted a

case study analyzing participants' perceptions about the implementation of a victim-offender program in juvenile justice systems. The researchers contended that their research would provide insight on the process for practitioners in Chile, Sweden, England, and Italy, enabling the practitioners to reshape policies and practices. The current study provides insight to higher education institutions, criminal justice practitioners, and social justice advocates regarding policies and practices related to the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders.

### **Summary**

A review of the literature resulted in the identification of themes about issues surrounding reentry of returning citizens and ex-offenders, the impediments, barriers, and challenges that the population faces when attempting to resume their lives, particularly within the context of critical race theory. The literature review summarizes the research related to policy, specifically the Ban the Box movement advocating for the removal of questions related to criminal history. The review of the literature supports the need for collaboration between universities, the criminal justice system, and communities to meet the needs of returning citizens and ex-offenders seeking admission to colleges and universities. In addition, the framework described in the research demonstrates theoretical support for strategic partnerships in the higher education context to offer higher learning to ex-offenders and returning citizens and consequently, reduce recidivism and produce educated, socially conscious, and economically prepared citizens.



### **Chapter Three: Research Method and Design**

The purpose of the study is to gain insight into the admissions process for returning citizen applicants by conducting a case study examining the experiences, perspectives, and understanding of admissions, campus safety, and residential life employees at a small, private Midwestern college, about the admissions policy and process for returning citizens. The researcher identified and described the applications process and the policy for returning citizen applicants and ascertained whether there is consistency in the process between campuses. This researcher conducted interviews with admissions, campus safety, and residential life employees involved in the admissions process for returning citizens to learn about their experiences, perspectives, and understanding of the policy and the process. Chapter One introduced the study and Chapter Two examined relevant literature. Chapter Three expounds upon the research method and design.

#### **Research Questions**

**Research Question 1:** What is the understanding of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees involved in the admissions process for returning citizens about the university admissions policy and process for returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 2:** What are the experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees involved with the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 3:** How do the experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees influence their perspectives and attitudes towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 4:** What are the differences, similarities, or patterns between the experiences, understanding, and perspectives of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees about and towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?

Using a mixed methods approach, specifically, the case study method and the analysis of descriptive statistics, an exploration of the experiences and understanding among the admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees are explored (Barlett & Vavrus, 2017; Merriam, 1998). Comparative case studies are an accepted methodology to accomplish the purpose of this exploration of organizational policies and processes. The case study approach is indicative of the interpretive research philosophy, which contends that researchers gain new knowledge by “understanding processes, shared place, purpose, or identity” (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). The study seeks to understand the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders. The study further endeavors to gain knowledge about the sample population’s understanding of their place, purpose, and identity in the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders.

The comparative case study is a process-oriented approach, without the bounds of a traditional case study (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Denzin, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The research design is emergent, exploring pertinent factors, actors, features, and the historical and contemporary processes producing a sense of shared

place, purpose, or identity (Barlett & Vavrus, 2017, p. 19). This research seeks to explore the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders and shared experiences and perspectives of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees about the process.

Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) further note that comparative case studies focus on critical theory, addressing societal inequalities and examining disparities caused by the development of structures and processes (p. 39). The case study allowed the researcher to conduct horizontal, vertical, and transversal comparisons between admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees' experiences and perspectives.

To accomplish the purposes of this research, the researcher recruited a sample population of 12 admissions, campus safety, and residential life professionals involved in all aspects of the admissions processing of applications and the integration of traditional, graduate, and non-traditional student admission to the university. There are 30 to 40 admissions professionals and others involved in the admissions process for returning citizens (Van Rjinsoever, 2017). The President of the small, private college and the Vice President of Student Affairs approved this research. Data collection ceased once the researcher achieved saturation.

The researcher used the following secondary data to inform the research: student population size, including undergraduate, graduate, and non-traditional students; university student demographics, application forms, number of returning citizen and ex-offender applicants, number of returning citizen or ex-offender applicants admitted and denied, and past and present university admissions policy for returning citizens and ex-

offenders. Data were readily accessible and publicly available regarding the student population size and demographics. The secondary data allowed the researcher to have a more precise picture of the extent of the issues related to the application process for returning citizens and ex-offender applicants at the college by examining the number of applicants with prior criminal histories and the outcomes of the admissions process.

At the onset of the research, it was unknown whether the College maintained data related to returning citizen or ex-offender applicants or whether a written policy, as opposed to a practice existed. The research revealed the existence of a practice rather than a policy. The researcher discusses the implications of the lack of formal policy in Chapter Five.

The interview questions are attached as Appendix A. Except for preliminary questions which solicited information and descriptive statistics about the participants' demographics, tenure, and experience, the inquiries are open-ended questions, which allowed participants to expand upon thoughts and enabled the researcher to gain knowledge, sometimes beyond that sought. Remler and Ryzin (2015) provided guidance for conducting qualitative interviews, stating that open-ended questions seek in-depth, detailed responses using participants' words (p. 67). The interview questions are a guide rather than a script. The researcher used probing questions to advance the conversation and to solicit further information from the participant, for example, 'tell me more about that.'

### **Sample Population**

The sample population included 12 admissions professionals, campus safety employees, and residential life employees involved in all aspects of the admissions

processing of applications and the integration of traditional, graduate, and non-traditional student admission to the university. At maximum capacity, there were 30 admissions professionals, campus safety employees, and residential life employees at the college.

The Director of Enrollment Management approved this research.

### **Study Procedure**

The researcher obtained email addresses of admissions professionals, campus safety employees, and residential life employees at the small, private Midwestern college from the college website. Potential study participants received an e-mail from the researcher describing the purpose of the study and the invitation to participate. An informed consent that also included the purpose of the study, the role of the researcher, a statement of confidentiality, and a statement that participation is voluntary, and participants are free to withdraw participation at any time were included in the email. The participant had an opportunity to consent to participate or to refuse to participate in the study. The researcher requested contact information to schedule interviews once the participants consented to participate in the study. Informed consent was obtained via affirmative response.

In addition, the researcher provided a phone number for participants to contact if they had questions. The researcher requested contact information for the potential participant, after consenting to participate in the study, to schedule an interview. In addition to contact information, the questionnaire after consent asked the participant to indicate whether they prefer a phone interview or a Zoom interview, as well as their availability for scheduling on the interview and whether they consented to recording. All participants consented to recording.

After scheduling interviews, all interviews were conducted by Zoom, audio-recorded, video-recorded, and transcribed. After reviewing the transcripts, the researcher used member checking by providing the participants a copy of the transcript to review for accuracy. In addition to member checking, to verify the reliability and validity of the data, the researcher used bracketing, triangulation, and reflexivity. The researcher read and re-read the transcripts to identify and highlight key terms and patterns, leading to thematic development, and to interpret the participant's understanding, perspectives, and experiences about the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders (Maxwell, 2013).

The analysis of the data includes emergent thematic coding to themes, patterns, and a descriptive narrative. The researcher analyzed the data horizontally and vertically. The results are reported in the form of a descriptive narrative, which includes the identification of the themes, anonymous excerpts from the interviews, and interpretation of the qualitative data.

The researcher also used secondary data to inform the research, such as the university's admissions practice for returning citizens and ex-offenders, the admissions applications used by the university in the admissions process, descriptive and redacted data about returning citizen and ex-offender applications, such as how many applications, how many were accepted or denied, types of crimes in general; specifically, the types of crimes committed by those accepted and the types of crimes committed by those denied, and local versus non-local applicants. The researcher requested redaction of identifying data, such as names and ID numbers, if such data existed. Data were available, reporting

the number of applicants that disclosed prior criminal histories and the disposition of those applications between 2004 and 2021.

### **Chapter Four: Results**

The purpose of this case study is to gain insight into the admissions process and policy for returning citizen and ex-offender applicants by exploring the experiences and understanding of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees at the small, private Midwestern college about the admissions policy and process for returning citizens and ex-offenders. To that end, the researcher interviewed 12 participants connected to admissions, campus safety, and residential life at the small, private college. The interview questions sought to answer four research questions, presented below.

**Research Question 1:** What is the understanding of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees involved in the admissions process for returning citizens about the university admissions policy and process for returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 2:** What are the experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees involved with the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 3:** How do the experiences of admissions professionals, Campus Safety, and Residential Life employees influence their perspectives and attitudes towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 4:** What are the differences, similarities, or patterns between the experiences, understanding, and perspectives of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees about and towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?



Once collected, the researcher coded and analyzed the data to determine the emergent themes. This chapter presents the results of the study, descriptions of the data analysis, participant demographics, and the emergent themes. The themes are organized according to the research question answered. Following that is a discussion of the felony and misdemeanor data relevant to this study and a synthesis of the data presented.

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher analyzed qualitative data by first coding each interview transcript using NVivo 12, a qualitative data analysis software that facilitates organization and visualization of data. The researcher drives the analysis process within the program. First, the researcher coded key words and phrases, while reading each interview line by line. In this process, the researcher analyzed interviews vertically, paying attention to the single interview transcript. Coding in the qualitative software program works by selecting, or highlighting, the passage of text that requires coding and assigning a brief descriptor, known as a code. The software stores the codes as nodes. A node contains all segments of text with identical codes, so when the researcher selects a node, all excerpts assigned that code are retrievable. After coding all transcripts, the researcher clustered the codes into larger categories, known as themes. This process is the horizontal analysis, where the researcher compared and contrasted codes across all transcripts. The themes contained codes clustered based on similarity, reflecting a concept that tied together all codes under its umbrella (Houghton et al., 2017; Oliveira et al., 2015; Woods et al., 2016; Zamawe, 2015).

Data analysis yielded 10 themes. The themes are as follows: Theme 1: Unclear Policy and Practices for RCEO Applicants; Theme 2: Lack of Awareness of Policy and

Practice; Theme 3: Need for Clarification of the Policy; Theme 4: Belief that a Policy Would Be Beneficial; Theme 5, Uncertainty about the Policy's Shape; Theme 6: Unofficial Practice and Procedures to Admit RCEOs; Theme 7: Subjectivity of Unofficial Admission Procedures; Theme 8: Unstated Consensus to Rescind Admission to an RCEO upon Disclosure of Criminal History; Theme 9: RCEOs Deserve a Second Chance; and Theme 10: Concern for Admitting Applicants with a History of Violent Crime.

The first five themes addressed Research Question 1. Themes 6, 7, and 8 addressed Research Question 2. Finally, Themes 9 and 10 addressed Research Question 3. Research Question 4 explores the differences and similarities within and across all three groups of study participants, admissions professionals, campus safety officers, and residential life employees. Within each theme, the discussion of the differences between categories of participants, including Admissions officials, Residential Life employees, and Campus Safety Officers, addresses Research Question 4 about the differences and similarities between the three categories of participants in their perceptions of RCEOs admitted to the college.

### **Study Site Characteristics**

The study compared the perspectives of three groups of employees at a small, private Midwestern college: admissions professionals, resident life employees, and campus safety employees. The college, a Predominantly Black Institution (PBI), is in a predominantly white rural community with a population of approximately 13,000. There are two state prisons in the community. About 50% of the college's students are African Americans from urban areas and 10% international students.

### Participant Demographics

The researcher interviewed 12 participants for this study (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022; Van Rjinsoever, 2017). This sample included two Residence Hall Directors, Director of Residence Life, Dean of Students, a Senior Regional Admissions Counselor, the Executive, Associate, and Assistant Directors of Admissions, and four Campus Safety Officers. Participants' jobs are in one of three campus departments: Residence Life, Campus Safety, and Admissions. Participants held their positions anywhere from under a year to 38 years. Table 1 displays the demographic data.

**Table 1**

Participant	Job Title	Department	Time in Position	Gender	Age	Race
1	Residence Hall Director	Student Affairs	2 years	F	22	B
2	Residence Hall Director	Student Affairs	< a year	F	21	W
3	Sr Regional Admissions counselor	Admissions	10 years	F	32	W
4	Dean of Students	Student Affairs	38 years	F	50	W
5	Campus Safety Officer	Campus Safety	2.5 years	M	26	W
6	Executive Director of Admissions	Admissions	2 years	M	35	W
7	Assistant Director of Admissions	Admissions	3 years	M	35	W
8	Campus Safety Officer	Campus Safety	< a year	F	21	B
9	Campus Safety Officer	Campus Safety	< a year	M	21	B
10	Campus Safety Officer	Campus Safety	< a year	F	30	W
11	Associate Director of Admissions	Admissions	23 years	F	43	W
12	Director of Residence Life	Student Affairs	4 years	M	32	B

## Results

### *Interview Data*

**Research Question 1:** What is the understanding of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees involved in the admissions process for returning citizens about the university admissions policy and process for returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Theme 1:** Unclear Policy and Practices for RCEO Applicants.

**Theme 2:** Lack of Awareness of Policy and Practice.

**Theme 3:** Need for Clarification of the Policy.

**Theme 4:** Belief that a Policy Would Be Beneficial.

**Theme 5:** Uncertainty about the Policy's Shape.

Research Question 1 sought to ascertain the understanding of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees about the university admissions policy and process for returning citizens and ex-offenders. Emergent from the interviews was an understanding that the campus had unclear, or nonexistent, policies and procedures for admitting RCEOs as students. Participants across all categories, including admissions professionals, campus safety, and Residential Life employees, reported the lack of an official policy for handling RCEOs. Many participants said if there was a policy, they were unaware of it. When the researcher asked participants if they were familiar with or knew of a policy for RCEO admittance to the college, participants responded that they did not know of a policy. This was true, even of admissions professionals or those responsible for admitting new students to the college. Consequently, three broad themes emerged: the unclarity/lack of a clear admissions

policy, the understanding that such a policy would be beneficial, and uncertainty as to the shape the policy would take.

Theme 1, Unclear Policy and Practices for RCEO Applicants; Theme 2, Lack of Awareness of Policy and Practice; Theme 3, Need for Clarification of the Policy; Theme 4: Belief that a Policy Would Be Beneficial; and Theme 5, Uncertainty about the Policy's Shape addressed RQ1, which asked: What is the understanding of admissions professionals, campus safety employees, and residential life employees about the university admissions policy and process for returning citizens and ex-offenders? Participants across all categories, including admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees, reported the lack of an official policy for handling RCEOs. Many participants said if there was a policy, they were unaware of it. When the researcher asked participants if they were familiar with or knew of a policy for RCEO admittance to the college, participants responded that they did not know of a policy. This was true, even of admissions professionals or those responsible for admitting new students to the college.

The Senior Regional Admissions Counselor, who has a 10-year tenure in the Admissions department, said, "That's crazy, because I do not know [what the policy is]" for RCEOs. The Executive Director of Admissions said only a practice existed, not a policy, and admitted, "That is something I think the college could definitely do better at, the putting in the steps that need to be taken . . . but right it's just a practice."

Residential life employees and campus safety officers were also unaware of a policy for admissions. "No, I do not know if there's a policy," said one Residence Hall Director. The Dean of Students answered similarly, "I'm not aware of any policy," and

suggested that a policy should “come into play before the student is admitted as a student.” One Campus Safety Officer said, “In my role, I’m actually unaware [if there is a policy for RCEO admissions].”

#### **Theme 4: Belief that a Policy Would Be Beneficial**

The fourth emergent theme is the belief that a clear, codified policy for the admission of RCEOs would be beneficial. Across all three categories of participants, five believed a policy to admit RCEOs should exist. One Campus Safety Officer said a policy would help “ensure that we are operating a safe campus community” and keep all students and staff safe. Another Campus Safety Officer suggested that for certain categories of offenders, like sex offenders, “an admissions policy would help provide guidance for processing the person’s application and decisions about college admission.” The Executive Director of Admissions also believed a formal policy would help admissions officials when making admissions decisions about a RCEO applicant. This participant explained,

I'd like to see a policy. I would rather have a policy put in place, something that would go into the catalog, that if we need it, if we needed to make certain that we know we're going off the policy and not being very so subjective, because I think it's with the practice that we're currently using, it's really a subjective thought of whether or not we're allowing the student and where we could just revert back and tell them, tell the student, now we have this policy in place and this is why you are either accepted or denied.

The Dean of Students also believed a policy would benefit staff, though did not specify exactly how. The participant said, “I think that would help out tremendously. Matter of

fact, I was going to write that down to look at some pieces for that. Because I know that it would help us out over here tremendously, I believe.”

**Theme 5: Uncertainly about the Policy’s Shape.**

Exactly what a policy to admit RCEOs would look like was unclear to participants. The Assistant Director of Admissions thought a policy should include a review board with input from the applicant’s parole or probation officer. The Director of Residence Life, a Campus Safety Officer, and a Residence Hall Director agreed about the involvement of a parole or probation officer in the admissions process, as stipulated in a policy. A Residence Hall Director was also unsure what a policy might look like, saying, “Especially including, like, FERPA, and knowing how much one can really share on that information,” and wondered about the problems posed by these limitations to information sharing. It was unclear from this participant if FERPA really had an impact on the process. One Campus Safety Officer and the Associate Director of Admissions suggested interviews with a RCEO applicant. As the admissions professional said,

I wish we would have a campus committee that would actually talk to the student on the issue. . . . I would like to meet with them face to face, because this would help an admissions committee read the applicant’s face and other body language.

Further, one Campus Safety Officer suggested a “routine background check” on the applicant. Another Campus Safety Officer believed that a policy should include a background check requirement when processing RCEO applicants, then clarified that maybe a full background check is inappropriate, but “at least checking the sex offender registry and seeing if they are on that” is a good starting point. Other study participants were hesitant. One Residence Hall Director said the college should “probably, definitely”

conduct background checks, indicating some hesitation in this contradictory statement.

The Associate Director of Admissions was also hesitant, stating, “I don’t think background checks are a bad thing, but then again, I hesitate on that, too.” The reason for the hesitation was because she believed in a clean slate and second chances, but as a parent had conflicting feelings. She said,

It's nice having a clean slate, looking at a person coming in, but then I have children that I've sent off to college. So, I would want a screening process as well to know that my son or daughter, all the safety precautions have been put in place.

If a policy did exist, participants suggested the involvement of a variety of school administrators in the admissions process. Three Residential Life employees and two Campus Safety Officers suggested involvement by the Dean of Students in the admissions process. A Residence Hall Director said, “At least, probably the Dean of Students [should be included].” In addition, three Residential Life employees, four Campus Safety Officers, and the Dean of Students suggested involvement by the Director of Campus Safety in admission procedures for a RCEO. A Campus Safety Officer said, “Campus safety, definitely, because we’ll have more hands-on with individuals like this.” Two Residence Hall Directors and three Campus Safety Officers also believed that the Admissions Director should be involved in the admissions policy for admitting RCEOs. “Admissions would have to be involved because that’s their role,” said one Residence Hall Director. Two Campus Safety Officers suggested a representative of Campus Safety as a part of the admissions process. Indeed, most of these participants, including those employees from Residence Life, Admissions, and Campus Safety, believed a policy



should include a team of people across different areas of the college when making the decision to admit a RCEO.

**Research Question 2:** What are the experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees involved with the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Theme 6:** Unofficial Practice and Procedures to Admit RCEOs

**Theme 7:** Subjectivity of Unofficial Admission Procedures

**Theme 8:** Unstated Consensus to Rescind Admission to an RCEO upon Disclosure of Criminal History.

Theme 6, Theme 7, and Theme 8 addressed Research Question 2: What are the experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees involved with the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders? Research Question 2 sought to understand the experiences of admissions professionals and others involved in the admissions process for returning citizens or ex-offenders with the admissions process for returning citizens. Building on the findings for RQ1, the findings for RQ2 revealed unofficial practices and procedures emerging for the admittance of RCEOs.

**Theme 6: Unofficial Practice and Procedures to Admit RCEOs**

Despite the lack of an admissions policy for RCEOs applying to attend the college, admissions professionals follow a process or practice when considering applications from known RCEOs. Only those personnel in the admissions department who reviewed the application have knowledge of a RCEO seeking admission. From the interview data, other common themes emerged, such as Theme 7: subjectivity of

unofficial admission procedures and Theme 8: an unstated consensus to rescind admission to an RCEO when learning of non-disclosure of their criminal history.

Other campus staff and employees did not appear knowledgeable of this process. Two Residence Hall Directors and one Campus Safety Officer reported specifically they had no knowledge of an admissions practice for RCEOs. Campus Safety and Residential Life employees did not describe any experience with the admissions process for RCEOs. In addition, Campus Safety and Residential Life employees said no one informs them of a RCEO applicant during the admissions process. Admissions personnel would have knowledge of a RCEO seeking admission to the college if that person checked the box on their application, which asked if they had misdemeanor or felony convictions, or if that applicant had otherwise disclosed their status.

### **Theme 7: The Subjectivity of Unofficial Admittance Procedures**

The emergent theme that also answers Research Question 2, Theme 7, was that the unofficial admittance procedures were subjective. Participants did not identify the procedures as such. Given that the college personnel would only have knowledge if someone checked the criminal history inquiry box, Admissions professionals described the process followed when reviewing the application of a RCEO into the college. If an applicant checked the box affirmatively, indicating conviction of a misdemeanor or felony, then according to the Associate Director of Admissions, a recruiter reaches out to the applicant. “When we see that on an application, we have the recruiters reach out to that applicant to see what the story is . . . what exactly happened. And there’s just so many scenarios,” said the Associate Director of Admissions. That there were “just so

many scenarios” suggested both a case-by-case basis and a subjectivity, based upon the perceptions of the specific Admissions employee handling the case.

Upon learning more about the nature of the incident, admissions personnel make decisions considering the crime and the threat that the RCEO may pose to campus safety. The Assistant Director of Admissions explained,

I can think of some recent applicants where I think a student said they got maybe pulled over for a DUI or maybe cannabis, which I wouldn’t think that that would be too harmful for the student public or anything. I would say the ones that I usually research more would be more along the lines of violent crimes, or maybe a more serious drug charge, something along those lines, then I would look deeper into that part.

Decisions by admissions personnel about admittance were subjective. There was no set of guidelines dictating the decision-making process, nor requirement for evidence. As the Admissions Executive Director indicated during the interview, only more complex cases are escalated to the Vice-President of Enrollment. The Admissions Executive Director also noted that “quite a few” applications come through the system where the charge was a DUI or underage drinking. In such instances, admissions personnel would likely not follow up with that applicant. Petty crimes are most frequently reported on applications. However, there is a different practice for violent crimes. The Executive Director of Admissions elaborated:

Now, if it's a violent crime, maybe a, maybe some sort of sexual crime that could be red flag to live on campus, then we'll follow up and try to, we'll try to contact that student, get the story of maybe when it, when they were arrested for when

they were pleaded guilty or whatever it was and how you kind of get a little bit more of the backstory and what the, what they're currently doing, why they want to go to college, kind of get what they're hoping to get out of college. They're wanting to live on campus or off campus. What major they don't want to go to try to really get a good, clear picture of who they are...if I can't make a decision where I'm, I don't feel comfortable making a decision on acceptance, I'll go up one more level [VP]. But if I feel comfortable enough after meeting with them, we'll go ahead and either admit or deny them.

### **Theme 8: Unofficial Policy to Rescind Admittance upon Non-Disclosure.**

Theme 8 also answers Research Question 2. Theme 8 occurred because there are occasionally instances when an applicant did not disclose their conviction on an application. When this happened and the admissions department learned of an applicant's conviction prior to RCEO enrollment in classes, admissions personnel rescinded the offer for admission. Because of the location of the school in such a small town, sometimes admissions personnel were familiar with offenders in the community and knew if applicants were omitting information on their applications. The Assistant Director of Admissions recalled an instance of this, saying, "I think we had a gentleman that applied a few years ago who was, I want to say, an ex-offender, but . . . and he did not mark that on his application, so we did rescind his admittance." The assertion by the Assistant Director of Admissions resulted in the inquiries about the number of local admissions versus non-local admissions. The chart below, which contains data between 2016 and 2021, demonstrates that there are consistently a higher percentage of non-local

applicants, rendering the Assistant Director of Admissions insights unsupported by the data.

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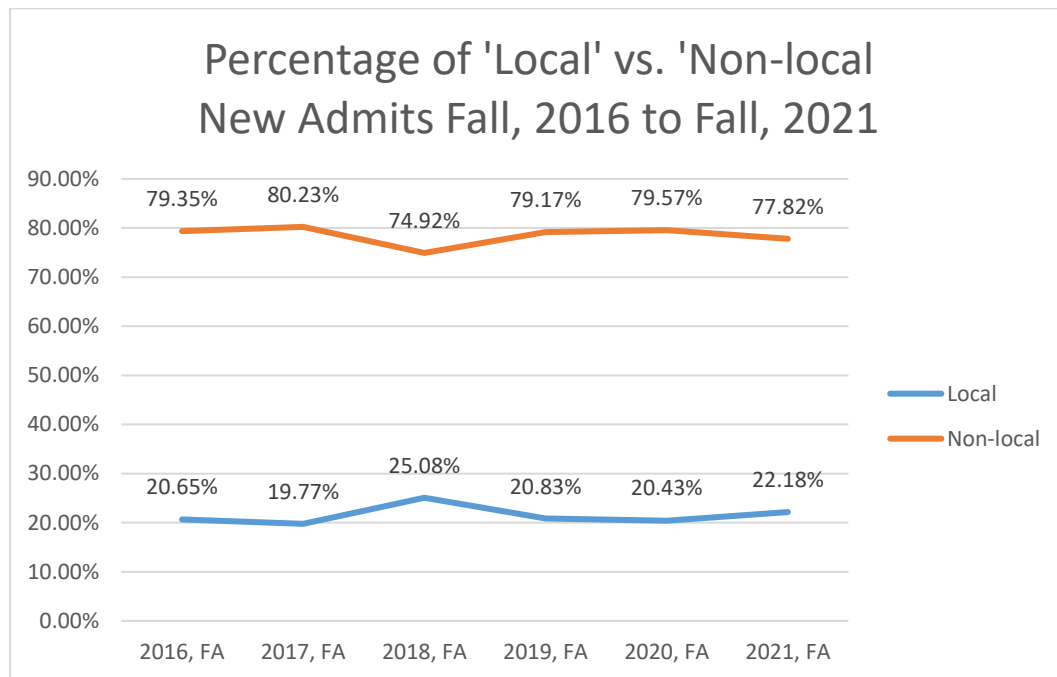
I think we had a gentleman that applied a few years ago who was, I want to say, an ex-offender, but...and he did not mark that on his application, so we did rescind his admittance.

The assertion by the Assistant Director of Admissions resulted in the inquiries about the number of local admissions versus non-local admissions. The chart in Figure 1, which contains data between 2016 and 2021, demonstrates that there are consistently a higher percentage of non-local applicants, rendering the Assistant Director of Admissions insights unsupported by the data; however, the perception that local resident college employees possess unique knowledge about local applicant RCEOs is founded. The community where the college is located has a population of 13,000. Many of the college employees, including a portion of the study participants, grew up in the community and have never left the community, which is close-knit. It is not unusual, given the characteristics of the site, for individuals to have knowledge, whether factual or based upon rumor, about other residents in the community, thus giving employees who live in

the community unique knowledge about applicants who also live in the community.

Figure 1 provides a comparison between the percentage of local applicants admitted vs. non-local applicants admitted from Fall 2016 to Fall 2021.

**Figure 1**



The Associate Director of Admissions provided more insight into this process:

If we know what the situation is, we'd make a decision. Right. Then, if we don't, we would call the student and say, I'm, you know, I say that I don't know how that situation actually happened. And we have two different letters for denial. One is for a felony that we are denying a student with a felony and we have one, you know what, we wouldn't call the student. We have another letter that says, "You have falsified information on your application." So, we don't ask that student in that sense. And I know the college lawyer was involved in that one. So, we took that to the vice president and said, "We know this student has also falsified

information.” So, contacted the lawyer, they came up with a letter, and we sent that letter to that student.

Although data does not substantiate the assertion of the study participant, the participant stated that sometimes an applicant failed to disclose their status on their application and the college admissions staff still admitted the applicant. This situation was not necessarily known by Residential Life employees or Campus Safety Officers, but the Dean of Students described an example. The Dean of Students recalled an incident that happened when the college admitted a RCEO without knowledge of the crime. The applicant did not mark on his application an indication of a prior conviction of a misdemeanor or felony. After enrolling in classes, this RCEO engaged in an altercation with another student, and was arrested, and permanently removed from campus. It was only after the incident that campus personnel learned about a prior incarceration on a domestic violence charge. The Dean of Students said that her fear of admitting RCEOs stemmed from the possibility that people were not honest on their applications, because there was little that even the admissions staff could do if an applicant was dishonest on their application. She said, “I think for me, a fear is that the student is not being honest on that application. Then we find out something as an incident happens on campus. I think that for me is a much larger picture.”

However, because of the small-town setting of the college, several admissions participants noted they would know an applicant and that person’s background, even if the applicant failed to disclose their conviction status on their application. Based on the data above, the admissions participant’s perception is real, though unsupported by statistics related to local versus non-local applicants admitted to the college.

**Research Question 3:** How do the experiences of Admissions professionals, Campus Safety, and Residential Life employees influence their perspectives and attitudes towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Theme 9:** RCEOs deserve a second change

**Theme 10:** Concern for Admitting Applicants with a History of Violent Crime

Theme 9, RCEOs deserve a second chance, and Theme 10, a concern for admitting applicants with a history of violent crime, addressed RQ3, which asked, “How do the experiences of Admissions professionals, Campus Safety, and Residential Life employees influence their perspectives and attitudes towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?” Most Residential Life and Campus Safety personnel reported their job responsibilities would not change if the college admitted and enrolled a RCEO. One Residence Hall Director said, “I wouldn’t change my views on my responsibilities at all with them,” and another said, “I don’t necessarily know from a professional standpoint what my responsibility goals for handling that student, but I think for me, just in general, I would treat that student like any other student.”

A Campus Safety Officer said responsibilities might change depending on the issue, and that, “I can address it to my supervisor,” but would not make anyone else aware. Another Campus Safety Officer said, “I don’t think I would have any responsibilities, really.” In addition, as one Campus Safety Officer explained, that is “none of our business” to know if the college admitted a RCEO and believed telling Campus Safety was not a good idea.



**Theme 9: Belief that RCEOs Deserve a Second Chance.**

Theme 9, Belief that RCEOs Deserve a Second Chance, emerged because of the overwhelming belief by participants that RCEOs deserved a second chance. To that end, it was not often that Admissions disclosed their histories to Campus Safety and Residential Life officials. As a result, Campus Safety Officers and Residential Life employees were unaware of any interaction they may have with RCEOs, especially in the admissions process. In addition to admissions office personnel, almost all study participants voiced their perspectives on the handling of RCEOs if admitted to the college. Most perspectives were incredibly positive. Several participants suggested RCEOs deserved a second chance in life and the opportunity for higher education. Two Residence Hall Directors spoke to this. One said, “I believe everybody is deserving of a second chance; they’ve made their amends by doing, by going to jail or whatever.” Along the same lines, another said, “I feel as if we have to give everybody a chance. We really don’t know or can even understand why certain things happen.”

In addition, three Campus Safety Officers said RCEOs deserved a second chance in life. One qualified this, though, and said, “That’s also dependent on the criminal history of the individual and what charges had been filed and what they were convicted of.” Another said “it’s an awesome thing” that the college could admit RCEOs and allow them to pursue higher education through a second chance.

In the Admissions office, staff felt similarly. The Executive Director said his personal view was that RCEOs should have a second chance and “if getting a bachelor’s degree or associates or whatever, whatever degree they want, we’ll help them through that process.” Like some of the Campus Safety Officers, the Associate Director of

Admissions believed the second chance was contingent upon the nature of the crime and the specific situation. “I truly believe it depends . . . I truly, I believe in second chances,” she said. However, she has not confronted a situation like murder, so could not speak to all possibilities. “I haven’t been put to that test,” she explained.

Participants varied in their perspectives on prior drug offenses, suggesting a bit more nuance involved in possible criminal drug histories. The Admissions counselor and Dean of Students suggested they would want to know more about any drug-related convictions. As the Dean of Students explained, “I think that the drugs play a role in this as well and, what’s your activity been in the drug world.” The Assistant Director of Admissions also believed prior drug offenses are problematic, especially if they involved “one of the higher ones on that part, like manufacturing, distribution.” A Campus Safety Officer said her concern is if a RCEO student began selling drugs on campus.

Participants across all departments suggested their concern for the safety of students if a fellow student was a RCEO depended on the nature of the crime, too. Two Residence Hall Directors said if the RCEO had committed a more serious offense, concern about the safety of other students increases. Admissions officers also felt this depended on the severity of the crime. “If the person didn’t know how to control their anger, or felt it was okay to physically attack someone, I would be worried for the other population of students on campus, especially my female students,” said an Admissions counselor. A Campus Safety Officer also communicated a similar position question. “Depending on what they did, I would say only thing that would make me very cautious if they had any severe policy enforcements that were broken,” he relayed.

**Theme 10: Concern for Admitting Applicants with a History of Violent Crime.**

While perspectives regarding RCEOs on campus proved expectedly mixed, a more uniform concern emerged when discussing those with violent criminal history: concern for student safety. The concept of violent crime includes all crimes where one or more individuals are either harmed by or threatened with violence. This includes assault, murder, theft, sexual assault, and rape, crimes whose presence on college campuses evoke anxiety and concern among parents and students. Residence Hall employees, Campus Safety Officers, and Admissions officials believed overall in second chances, yet they also suggested this might depend on the crime committed. Perspectives varied on this topic. Seven participants, including Residential Life employees, Campus Safety Officers, and Admissions officials, said they are more concerned about RCEOs who committed violent crimes. One Residential Hall Director said murder was “the only big one” of concern, and that the concern stemmed from the fact that she was “in a position where I do have to care for our students,” and admitting a convicted murderer might present a challenge to her ability to assure student safety. The Director of Residence Life said murder and other violent crimes would also concern him from a safety standpoint for the RCEO and other students on campus. He would want to ensure the RCEO had resources in place if that person needed help. Campus Safety Officers believed violent crimes like aggravated assaults, battery, and attempted homicides are a cause for concern.

For one Admissions official, “something along the lines of armed robbery” is a concern. The former Director of Admissions stated similar concerns, stating,

Mainly violent crimes. Somebody who's, unlawful possession of a weapon.

Those, those would trigger for me, to not bring them on campus. I, the safety of

our students then comes in question for me, it's like, do they still have access to those weapons? What would happen if you bring them to campus? Those are some big red flags for me.

A Senior Admissions Counselor noted that a history of violent crime would be a concern, stating, “If the person didn't know how to control their anger, or felt it was okay to physically attack someone, I would be worried for the other population of students on campus, especially my female students.”

Sexual offenses and sex offenders also caused concern amongst participants. One Admissions counselor said a pedophile is a problem, as did a Campus Safety Officer, who noted that there are students living on campus under 18 years old. In fact, four Campus Safety Officers specified that sex-related crimes and sexual offenses are problematic. One specified that they would be “especially” concerned if the crime were committed against “a minor or somebody under the age of 18.” The Senior Regional Admissions Counsellor stated that a pedophile would be a cause for concern. A Campus Safety Officer stated that admitting RCEOs with a history of violent sexual crime was a cause for concern, as it would be a violation of the public’s trust. “We're required a lot of trust from the public and with all these students on campus, to have somebody with a history of violent sex crimes just doesn't sit too easy for me.” Another Campus Safety Officer admitted concern if a sex offender “applied to live on campus with other kids.” As stated during this and the previous theme, campus officials believed RCEO’s deserved a second chance; however, the crimes that caused the most concern were the violent crimes.

**Research Question 4:** What are the differences, similarities, or patterns between the experiences, understanding, and perspectives of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees about and towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?

Research Question 4 sought to compare the differences and similarities between admissions professionals and others involved in the admissions process for returning citizens in their perceptions of returning citizens or ex-offenders admitted to the college. While partially addressed in the results for RQ2 and RQ3, the position held by those involved in the admissions process proved consistent and uniform. All the individuals involved stated that their perceptions of the RCEOs were based upon the crime committed and perceptions of its impact on student safety, where violent crimes and sexual crimes were those that raised the most concern. An Associate Director of Admissions stated the general consensus succinctly by saying, “It depends on each situation. And like how long ago it's been, if it was a really violent crime.” A Senior Regional Admissions Counselor stated:

It depends on the crime, honestly. If it was. . . Because that previous schools that I've worked at, I had come across students where they had a drug related charge. That really didn't do anything to me, as much as me finding out that someone was arrested because of they had hit domestic violence, pretty much. Things like that, that's what makes me personally feel a little uneasy with some around the regular population of students, or if they did something to a child, that automatically may make me feel uneasy with them around other students.

A former Director of Admissions shared similar sentiments, stating, “Let's say it was a DUI charge and underage drinking . . . Quite probably no questions asked. . . . Now, if it's a violent crime, maybe a, maybe some sort of sexual crime that could be red flag to live on campus.” An Assistant Director of Admissions expressed their only concern would be for student safety, but their perception would depend on the crime. “And again, that's where I would look maybe more into the crime on that part to see would the overall student population be at risk, if we were to admit that student into the campus body.”

Similarly, three of the four admissions professionals interviewed expressed a belief that everyone deserved a second chance. A former Director of Admissions connected obtaining an education to success after returning to society.

My personal view is, students or students who are ex-offenders are returning since should, should be given a second chance. They should have an opportunity to continue their education or, or get back into society and, and if getting a bachelor's degree or associates or whatever.

The Assistant Director of Admissions concurred. “I would hope that they would be able to have academic success after, or a returning citizen, after the fact. I'm not opposed to giving people a second chance.” An Associate Director of Admissions said, “I believe in second chances, I really do.”

### **Similarities**

The most common similarity that both safety officers and residential life professionals had with the admissions professionals was a belief that RCEOs deserved a second chance. One male Safety Officer said, “I personally believe most people should

be eligible for a second chance, but that's also dependent on the criminal history of the individual and what charges had been filed and what they were convicted of.” A female Safety Officer concurred, “I think it's great, actually. I think everybody deserves a chance to better themselves. And I think it's an awesome thing.” A male Residence Hall Director said,

So, for me, my views towards them are they deserve a second chance. I believe everybody is deserving of a second chance. I know myself, I've been given multiple chances. I think sometimes they're just looking for somebody to have that faith in them to have their backs.

A Director of Residence Life said, “My personal opinion is that, if they have an opportunity and the ability to apply for college, why not give them that chance, that opportunity?”

Like those involved in the admissions process, both campus safety and residential life expressed concerns over RCEOs who committed violent and/or sexual crimes. One male Safety Officer said his only concerns were with RCEOs who had “violent crimes, felony convictions, so aggravated assaults, sexual assaults, attempted homicides,” adding that he would “prefer” the college to not admit any RCEO with sexual assault convictions. A female Safety Officer expressed similar views regarding concern for RCEOs with a history of sexual crime. “The only concern would be sex offenders, but they have pretty strict guidelines on what they can and cannot do, so that will not be much of a concern either.” A female Residence Hall Director stated that her primary concern was with violent crimes “such as murder. I think that's the only big one. I feel

like murder, just because we are on a college campuses.” A male counterpart concurred, saying,

I would definitely have to say murder would be a big one for me. Yeah, I do believe that they deserve a second chance, but that might put a little bit more edge when I'm dealing with that student or a person of that nature.

### **Differences**

Two differences emerged in comparing the perceptions of RCEOs held by Campus Safety and Residential Life to those held by admissions professionals. Campus Safety officers expressed a more overt concern for the safety of students, as was to be expected given their role on campus. One male Campus Safety Officer who previously stated a preference for denying those convicted of violent crimes, particularly those of a sexual nature, stated that safety was a matter of trust and that, as safety officers, they “required a lot of trust from the public and with all these students on campus, to have somebody with a history of violent sex crimes just doesn't sit too easy.” A second male Safety Officer stated he would have concerns “depending on what they did.” All Campus Safety Officers interviewed believed that Campus Safety should be informed about RCEO status and should be involved in the decision-making process of admissions.

Residential Life employees expressed a belief that an RCEO status should not require special treatment and that RCEOs admitted should be treated like any other student. A male Residence Hall Director said,

I wouldn't change my views on my responsibilities at all with them. They're just like any other student they're trying to better themselves. So, I would treat them



with the same amount of respect and the same amount of dignity that I would give any student.

A female Residence Hall Director added, “here's not always a negative term granted. Yes, you did something, but I feel like we can't always judge people on what they've been through as well, so I wouldn't feel any different.” The Director of Residence Life said, “I believe our background and our experiences, it does not define who we are and does not define what our future is.”

### **Felony and Misdemeanor Data**

The purpose of analyzing the felony and misdemeanor data was to ascertain the frequency and volume of RCEO applications. All study participants were not employed by the college during the collection period of the felony and misdemeanor data and were not expected nor asked to validate the data, which the college provided. If the numbers of RCEO applicants were insignificant or perhaps non-existent, it would indeed be a significant limitation to the study.

The college collected data from 2004 to 2021 from applications of people who affirmatively checked the box indicating conviction of a misdemeanor or felony. During this period, the college received 412 such applications. Of these, the college admitted 151 of the applicants. One hundred and ninety-nine applied with no decision made, and admissions denied 62 applications. The term “no decision” means admissions representatives could not make an admission decision on the application, because applicants did not complete the application process, usually missing transcripts. SAT/ACT test scores required before offering an acceptance or denial on their

application. Women comprised 133 of these applicants and 279 were men. Table 2 presents the acceptance rates of those with misdemeanor or felony convictions by gender.

**Table 2**

*Applications and Acceptance by Gender*

Gender	Accepted	No decision	Denied	Total
Men	98	127	54	279
Women	52	71	10	133

The researcher analyzed the data for most frequently cited misdemeanor and felony convictions by gender and whether the college admitted the applicant. Table 3, presents these data.

**Table 3**

*Common Charges and Admittance*

Gender	Charge	Admitted	No decision	Denied
Women	Theft/burglary	8	13	0
	Forgery/fraud	4	2	0
	Drug-related or DUI	5	6	0
	Assault/battery	7	1	1
	Obstruction of justice	2	2	1
Men	Theft/burglary	12	14	8
	Forgery/fraud	1	1	1
	Drug-related or DUI	13	16	4
	Assault/battery	5	7	5
	Obstruction of justice	0	1	1

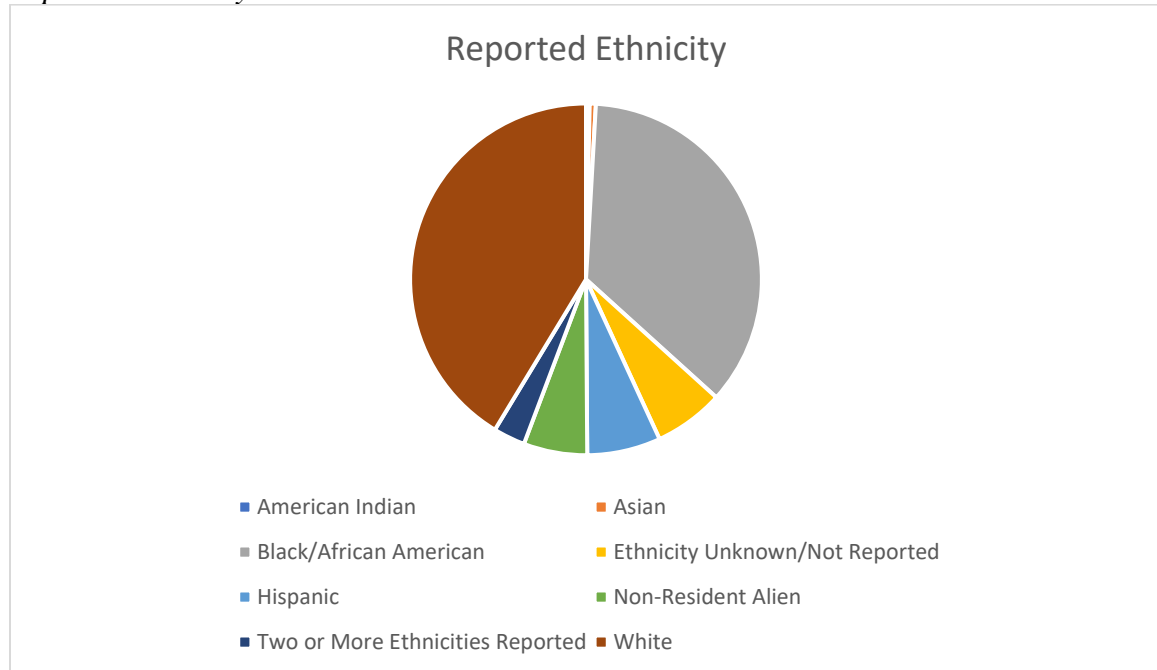
**College Demographic Data**

In Fall 2021, there were 888 students enrolled at the college. There were 456 women and 432 men. Of these, 407 were freshmen, 136 were sophomores, 143 were juniors, 172 were seniors, and 30 were graduate students. Most students (67.9%) were between the ages of 18 and 22, and the second-largest percentage (7.8%) were 42 years

old and over. Fifty-eight percent of students were campus residents, and the remainder were commuter students. The ethnic breakdown of students is presented in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**

*Reported Ethnicity*



*Note.* Adapted from data provided by college (2021).

In recent years, college retention rates improved from 51.91% in 2017-2018, to 54.65% in 2018-2019, and to 62.10% in 2019-2020. Data from the Fall 2014 cohort showed a success rate of 71.8%.

### **Synthesis of Data**

Interview data revealed that Campus Safety and Residential Life employees had minimal understanding or knowledge of the admissions practice to admit RCEOs.

Additionally, the college has no official policy to admit RCEOs. Despite this limitation, admissions professionals implemented a practice to admit RCEOs, providing those applicants acknowledged on their application misdemeanor or felony convictions. In these instances, Admissions professionals follow up with the RCEO applicant to obtain

more information about the conviction and make an admissions decision based on that information. However, no clear standards for admission seem to exist. Of similar concern is that, despite a common concern for the safety of the students, many personnel seem to be unaware or unconcerned about the presence of RCEOs. Moreover, the statistical data do not support the concerns expressed by personnel, revealing that perceptions often differed from practice.

The point of intersection between the interview data and the data on convicted misdemeanor and felony applicants revealed that what admissions personnel described in their interviews was not what happened when someone with a conviction actually applied. Those participants also reported that very few people convicted of a misdemeanor or felony apply each year. Admissions personnel described the crimes that would concern them and prevent them from admitting applicants to the college. These crimes included drug-related charges, physical violence like assault and battery, and sex-related offenses. Data kept on these applicants showed that common convictions included for assault/battery, drug-related charges or DUIs, and theft/burglary. In the period under review, the college admitted 18 people with drug-related charges or DUIs. For 22 applicants, there was no decision, and four RCEO applicants' admission were denied. Pertaining to assault/battery charges, the college admitted 12 RCEO applicants, for eight, no decision, and for six applicants, denial of admission. For both categories, the college admitted more applicants with violent crimes and drug-related charges than denied. It is unclear why no decision was made for the others.

**Summary**

In this chapter, the researcher presented results from the study. Staff from the college's Admissions, Campus Safety, and Residential Life department provided interviews. The key findings indicated that Admissions personnel, as opposed to employees who worked for Residential Life and Campus Safety, are more aware of and experienced in handling RCEOs who sought admission to the college. Residential Life staff and Campus Safety Officers had little-to-no knowledge of any policies, procedures, or practices in place for a RCEO applicant. In fact, they reported they would only be aware of a RCEO at the college if that person disclosed the information. Admissions staff had more experience with admitting RCEOs. Though no official policy was in place for admitting RCEOs, Admissions personnel described the practices and procedures used to determine whether to admit a RCEO. Nearly all participants were clear, however, that depending on the crime, most RCEOs deserved a second chance, warranted admission to the college, and deserved the opportunity of higher education. In the next chapter, the researcher will discuss these findings in greater detail in relation to the literature and make recommendations based on these findings.

## **Chapter Five: Discussion**

The purpose of the research was to examine the admissions process for RCEOs from the perspective of three populations, admissions, campus safety, and residential life at a small, private Midwestern institution of higher learning. The research is significant, because there is a strong correlation between higher education and recidivism. Despite the strong connection between education and recidivism, higher education institutions continue to collect information related to the criminal histories of its applicants. The concern is greater than the collection of data concerning criminal history. Higher education institutions make subjective admissions decisions resulting in, at the very least, implicit bias against RCEOs. Chapter Five includes a summary of the findings and a synthesis of the findings with existing literature. In addition, the discussion includes limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

The Center for Community Alternatives communicates that college and universities report no impact on campus safety, because of the collection of criminal history data by institutions of higher education (Weissman et al., 2010). The finding is consistent with that in the current research (Rosenthal, et al., 2015). The Clery Report, the result of legislation that passed after the on-campus murder of a college student, Jean Clery, requires colleges to collect data related to crimes committed on campus. Because the Clery Report identifies the higher education institution, the citation is omitted to protect the identity of the small, private Midwestern college. However, the report contains no reports of criminal activity during the most recent report cycle, the 2020-2021 academic year.

The study contributes to the body of literature about college admissions and RCEOs and explored the small, private Midwestern college's admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders and their experiences through the eyes of admissions, campus safety employees, and residential life employees.

The research questions were:

**Research Question 1:** What is the understanding of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees about the university admissions policy and process for returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 2:** What are the experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees involved with the admissions process for returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 3:** How do the experiences of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees influence their perspectives and attitudes towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?

**Research Question 4:** What are the differences, similarities, or patterns between the experiences, understanding, and perspectives of admissions professionals, campus safety, and residential life employees about and towards returning citizens and ex-offenders?

### **Summary of Findings**

Staff from the college's Admissions, Campus Safety, and Residential Life department provided interviews. The key findings indicated that Admissions professionals, as opposed to employees who worked for Residential Life and Campus Safety, were more aware of and experienced in handling RCEOs applying for admission

to the college. Residential Life staff and Campus Safety Officers had little to no knowledge of any policies, procedures, or practices in place at the college for a RCEO applicant. In fact, they reported they would only know if a RCEO was a student at the college if that person disclosed the information or if admissions professionals or campus safety officers disclosed the information post-admission.

Admissions staff had more experience with admitting RCEOs. Though no official policy was in place for admitting RCEOs, admissions personnel described the practices and procedures followed to admit a RCEO. Nearly all participants were clear, however, that depending on the crime, most RCEOs deserved a second chance, warranted admission to the college, and deserved the opportunity of higher education. The first five themes related to the lack of clarity and awareness of the policy and practices for the admission of RCEO applicants, the need for clarification, and the belief of study participants regarding the benefits of established policy and practices. Themes six through eight related to the unofficial nature of the practice of admitting RCEOs, the subjectivity involved in the process, and a mutual understanding that admissions would rescind an RCEO admission if knowledge of criminal history emerged post-admission. Finally, the themes nine and 10 revealed that most study participants agreed that RCEOs deserved a second chance, except for those who committed violent or sexual crimes.

## **Discussion**

In the current study, residential life and campus safety employees indicated little or no knowledge of any process or procedure for the admission of RCEOs to the institution. While some of the admissions employees indicated awareness of a process or



procedure, most were unclear about the details. The administrators in admissions acknowledged that there is no clear policy or procedure for the admissions of RCEOs.

The lack of clarity of the admissions process for RCEOs is inconsistent with 70% of institutions of higher learning, according to Custer (2016). In his literature review focusing on admissions policies for RCEOs, Custer (2016) discussed research showing that the pressure on college and university administrators to provide a safe environment for students resulted in the development of policies and procedures that clearly outline the steps required for admissions. The dominant model used by colleges and universities is the development of a committee structure that typically includes representatives who address student conduct issues, admissions, law enforcement or campus safety, counseling, university counsel, and a faculty representative. The committee reviews the applications and makes decisions about admission of the applicant to the college. At the research site, a small, private Midwestern college, there is no such committee or any other formal structure for the review of RCEO admission.

The unofficial practices and procedures resulted in inconsistencies and is contrary to best practices. Because of the unofficial nature of the process, there are a high percentage of “no decision” determinations (48%). No decision results when RCEO applicants do not complete the admissions process or fail to provide the documentation required for decision. It is important to note that the percentage of “no decision” applicants is consistent with the experience of other colleges and universities (Custer, 2016).

The Center for Community Alternatives (CCA) conducted a study of the admissions process for RCEOs in the State University of New York (SUNY) system. All

64 institutions that are a part of the SUNY system require that applicants disclose previous criminal histories. CCA reports that SUNY had almost 3,000 RCEO applicants; however, about two-thirds did not complete the admission process. For those applicants who completed the admissions process, the rejection rate was low, less than 10% (Weissman et al., 2010). Rosenthal, et al. (2015) conducted research confirming that colleges and universities admit most RCEOs who persist in the admissions process. In the current study, consistent with the literature, the college also admitted most of the RCEOs who completed the admissions process. There was a large percentage of ‘no decision,’ (48%), which resulted when the RCEO did not provide the requested documentation. While the percentage of ‘no decision’ results is high, the rejection rate, based on the data is low (16%). In other words, there are a high percentage of applicants that do not complete the admissions process, but a low rejection rate among those who do complete the process.

Residential life, campus safety, and admissions employees were consistent in their perspectives about sex offenders and those convicted of violent crimes, such as murder, aggravated assault, and rape. The research supports the perspective of study participants. The current study broadened the examination of the perspectives of those involved in the admissions process beyond sexual offenses.

Rubenstein et al. (2019) examined stigma related to college admissions as it relates to sex offenders. The researchers indicate that the stereotypes and misinformation about the level of recidivism among sex offenders exasperates the college admissions process even more. The current research confirms the findings of Rubenstein et al. (2019). Study participants demonstrated more hesitation about the admission of sex

offenders than any other category of offenders. For other offender types, such as drugs, theft, and other non-violent crimes, participants believed that offenders in these areas deserved a second chance. However, RCEOs were not a part of the sample, diminishing the impact of the belief that they are entitled to a second chance. Of course, RCEOs believe that they deserve a second chance and would benefit in knowing that others support their position.

In addition to stigma, barriers also include housing, employment, food insecurity, and the pursuit of higher education (Ramaswamy, 2015; Rubenstein, et al., 2019). Ramaswamy (2015) conducted a legal analysis which addresses the disproportionate impact of the barriers to education on minority populations. In doing so, the researcher noted that access to higher education is critical to the success of returning citizens and ex-offenders. Removing the barriers, or at the very least, minimizing the barriers, facilitates reentry in ways that maximize a successful transition. Ramaswamy (2015) further notes that there is no educational benefit to the examination of the criminal histories of applicants.

In this research, the researcher did not collect data related to housing insecurity, food insecurity, and other barriers, only the barriers related to criminal history. While study participants viewed criminal history as a barrier to the pursuit of a higher education, residential life, and campus safety workers were oblivious about the admissions process and screening of applicants with criminal histories. The lack of knowledge about the admissions process resulted in the lack of information about the impact of the criminal history on the admissions process, such as whether the criminal history is, in fact, a barrier to admissions to the college.

Social justice advocates and policy makers addressed the visible barriers; however, invisible barriers still exist, such as stigma and preconceived notions about previously incarcerated persons (Couloute, 2018). Although the small, private Midwestern college, like most other colleges and universities, asks applicants about criminal convictions on the admissions application and follows extended admissions process for applicants with criminal convictions, study participants were consistent in their perspectives that RCEOs deserve an opportunity to improve their lives by pursuing a higher education. Their perspectives, supported by the research shows a strong correlation between education and recidivism (Baer, et al., 2006; Custer, 2013, 2016; 2018).

The literature shows that the higher the level of education, the lower the recidivism. However, the participants were also consistent in their belief that not all offenders deserve a second chance. Consistent with the research, as stated above, they viewed sex offenders and violent offenders as less deserving of an opportunity to pursue a college degree.

Though the literature addresses possible legal implications with the admissions of returning citizens and ex-offenders, such as contentions of negligent admissions if the returning citizen or ex-offender compromises campus safety, study participants did not voice this concern (Custer, 2016; Pierce, et al., 2014). Study participants did not communicate concern for legal implications espoused in the literature, though admittedly, it is likely that they are not aware of the specific implications addressed by the literature. However, there was concern expressed about possible violations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA protects the privacy of students

over the age of 18, specifically the right to have access to education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records. However, some criminal records are publicly accessible and not subject the protection of FERPA.

Custer (2018) conducts a comparative analysis of university admissions for ex-offenders in the United States and the United Kingdom. He discussed university policies that require disclosure of criminal histories and the social movement, Ban the Box, which seek to remove the criminal history barrier for ex-offenders who want to pursue higher education. In this qualitative study, Custer (2018) identified themes. The researcher-identified themes included the criminal records law, the university admissions policies, including the logic, the history, and the language, and the admissions data. After conducting an analysis, Custer (2018) concluded that universities should modify or abandon the policies requiring disclosure of criminal history.

The perspectives of study participants about the significance and life-changing impact of an education for RCEOs is also consistent with the literature. Halkovic and Greene (2015) review a plethora of research confirming the correlation between education level and criminal involvement, positing that the higher the educational level, the lower recidivism. Despite strong peer-reviewed support, colleges and universities continue to focus on the negative characteristics of ex-offenders rather than viewing the population as contributing positively to the higher education community. Residential life, campus safety, and admissions employees embraced identical perspectives about the significance of educational opportunities to the lives and future of RCEOs.

A review of the small, private Midwestern college's annual mandatory submission of crime statistics revealed no criminal activity on campus from 2017 through 2019, the period reported by the Department of Education's Campus Safety and Security. During the same timeframe, there were RCEOs matriculating at the college. Consistent with the research, the data provided by the college demonstrates that there is no correlation between RCEO status and crime on campus.

### **University Social Responsibility**

Based upon the literature discussed in Chapter Two, the small, Midwestern college that is the site for the research should demonstrate University Social Responsibility (USR) by providing educational opportunities for RCEOs and by educating staff and faculty to eliminate or at least minimize the stigma and barriers that RCEOs face to further their education. The establishment of a consistent, formal policy, codifying the practices would demonstrate USR.

Jorge and Pena (2017) conducted a literature review of articles about university social responsibility from 15 academic journals. The articles spanned a 15-year period, ranging from 2000 to 2015. The researchers analyzed the literature to ascertain the emergence of the concept of university social responsibility, to identify gaps in the literature, and to make recommendations for future research. The shift in the societal role of institutions of higher learning revealed a responsibility to develop curricula that integrates principles of social responsibility in teaching, research, and management and advocates for community engagement.

Jung (2017) discusses the consequences and implications to ex-offenders and returning citizens when colleges and universities inquire about criminal history on

admissions applications. The research supports the contention that higher levels of education reduce recidivism. Jung (2017) further discussed the minimal impact on campus safety, because of college inquiries about criminal history. Rather, inquiring about criminal history increases stigma and limits opportunities for higher education for the formerly incarcerated. The article also addressed the legal implications for colleges when applicants fail to disclose prior criminal history, providing examples of universities sued by victims for negligent admission of an ex-offender. Jung (2017) recommends a balanced approach that addresses the concerns from those that view the questions about criminal history as limiting access to higher education and those who are concerned about campus safety.

The balanced approach recommended is that outlined in the Fair Access to Education Act of 2015, which would remove marijuana-related misdemeanors from the list of offenses that affect eligibility for federal loans, grants, and work study. The bill did not pass. The researchers designed the study to address 1) whether and to what extent four-year colleges discriminate based on criminal records; 2) whether such discrimination varies by race and institutional context, including the local crime rate; and 3) how a strategy to remove criminal records questions from college application forms might affect admissions and racial inequality (pp. 163-164). A quantitative analysis of the data indicated statistical significance in the level of discrimination and rejection rate between tester applicants with criminal records and those without.

Higher education institutions, including the college that is the subject of this study, should take practical steps specifically designed to address potential discrimination against RCEOs and to increase the admission rate. From a pragmatic standpoint, to do so

increases the enrollment at higher education institutions at a time when enrollment is declining nationwide, resulting in closure of colleges and universities. The RCEO population of learners is either overlooked by college recruiters or discouraged from applying because of the onerous nature of the process. Elimination of the barriers and proactive recruitment of the RCEO population demonstrates USR.

Tyler and Brockmann (2017) discussed the role of public policy in stigmatizing ex-offenders and returning citizens and make policy recommendations to address the stigma related to race, mental health, drug addiction, the impact on the system-involved and their families. The researchers recommend policy reform in the treatment of mental health, sentencing, recidivism, Ban the Box legislation, and collateral consequences. The elimination of the questions related to criminal history during the admissions process provides opportunities for RCEOs to further their education, thus reducing the likelihood of recidivism. As a result, RCEOs become responsible citizens. The extant study demonstrates that increasingly, individual concern of others criminal background is diminishing, except for violent and sexual crimes. It is time for the creation of policies that are consistent with societal viewpoints.

### **Implications**

There are societal, policy, and process-related implications of the research. Given the support provided by the literature, the perspectives of study participants towards RCEOs, the establishment of a policy, including a committee comprised of administration, faculty, campus safety, residential life, the conduct officer, a law enforcement representative, and admissions would provide a consistent admissions experience for RCEOs. In addition, since the study participants have no demonstrative



bias against RCEOs, except sex offenders and violent offenders, there is a potential pool of applicants that recruiters may have overlooked. RCEOs can make valuable contributions on college and university campuses and communities (Bowman & Ely, 2020).

Cossyleon and Flores (2020) conducted an ethnographical study, examining the involvement of returning citizens in a social movement, specifically Fighting to Overcome Records and Create Equality (FORCE). FORCE is a movement created and led by formerly incarcerated persons. They partnered with Community Renewal Society (CRS) to change law and policy. The study, unlike most in the literature, considered low income, marginalized populations involved in social movements.

The researchers found that study participants developed social capital and a sense of belonging because of their involvement in FORCE. There is extensive discussion about the social, economic, and personal consequences of incarceration, including exclusion from available opportunities and stigma. Interestingly, the researchers note that the exclusion is the result of returning citizens' involvement in formal and informal legal and social practices, i.e., the criminal justice system and post-incarceration stigmatization.

In the current study, study participants expressed a perspective that RCEOs criminal history should remain private and that they should have the opportunity to become an integral part of the campus community. Again, except for sex offenders and violent offenders, there was no hesitation on the part of study participants to include those with prior criminal convictions in the campus community.

There are 2.3 million Americans incarcerated in state and federal prisons, many for drug-related crimes that occurred before the societal shift towards cannabis, now legalized in 19 states. On October 6, 2022, United States President, Joe Biden, pardoned thousands of prisoners incarcerated in federal prisons for simple possession of marijuana, indicating the evolution of societal and political views toward drug offenders.

Unfortunately, the states have not yet followed suit by pardoning offenders incarcerated in state prisons for simple possession of marijuana. However, given the views of study participants towards RCEOs and their belief that they deserve a second chance, there is the potential for policy change that may eliminate existing barriers to college admission.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The current research did not explore the reasons that study participants voiced negatives concerns related to sex-related offenses as compared to other criminal offenses. Other limitations included the limited tenure of the participants, the lack of knowledge about the presence of returning citizens or ex-offenders on campus, and the lack of awareness of the existence of a policy or practice related to the admissions of returning citizens and ex-offenders.

The study participants' tenure with the college ranged from less than a year to 38 years. This limited the knowledge of the less senior participants related to the process of admitting RCEO applicants. Though the senior staff was more aware of a practice, they had relatively little or no knowledge about the presence of RCEOs on campus.

Admissions did not communicate with other departments when an RCEO applied or was admitted to the college, limiting the involvement of residential life and campus safety employees in the process.

Other than the Director of Admissions, only one other study participant, a 23-year admissions professional, acknowledged awareness of a policy or practice. The lack of awareness of the existence of a policy or practice was a limitation because of the inability of the researcher to gather rich data on the subject matter. The Director of Admissions was the most knowledgeable. Even the long-term admissions professional's knowledge was limited.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Future researchers should specify as a requirement of participation in the study, some knowledge of the process, policy, or practice. It does not help to advance the research if study participants have no knowledge. If possible, it would help if the researcher could ascertain in advance of the research whether there is an existing policy or practice, since such was the subject matter of the research. In addition, future researchers could specify a required number of years of experience though in this study, the institutional size would have limited the number of available participants.

Future researchers should also conduct quantitative, qualitative, or mixed method research where the sample population are offenders who experienced the college admissions process. Speaking directly to offenders will provide more accurate insight into their experience in navigating the college admissions process. Conducting focus groups or individual interviews with offenders will allow the researcher to draw conclusions rather than inferences about whether their criminal history affected their ability to pursue a higher education. It will also reveal whether the stigma described in the research impeded admission or successful matriculation to an institution of higher learning.

In addition, future research should compare the policies, processes, and admissions outcomes for RCEOs of multiple colleges and universities. A comparative case study involving multiple colleges and universities of comparable size would enable the researchers to examine whether there are consistencies or inconsistencies in the admissions process and the factors that cause the variances in the process.

Future researchers may also examine whether there is a disparate impact in admissions of RCEOs based upon race, since most incarcerated persons are minorities. Along those same lines, future researchers could focus on those offenses that concerned the study participants in this study, sex offenses and violent offenses, by examining how other colleges and universities process their applications and the specifics of their policies related to these categories of offenders. An examination of the types of sex offenses and violent crimes is warranted. There are some offenses classified as sex offenses that may not be as onerous upon inspection, i.e., Romeo and Juliet cases, or indecent exposure. Criminal justice policy continues to require offenders to enroll on sex offender registries, resulting in a stigma that impedes many areas of progress in their lives, including admission to institutions of higher learning.

## **Conclusion**

The study is significant, and the results are impactful for colleges and universities, especially small private colleges. Before the COVID pandemic, institutions of higher learning struggled with recruitment and enrollment. The pandemic exasperated recruitment and enrollment efforts, domestically and internationally. The current study reveals that there is a population of potential students often overlooked by colleges and universities because of the stigma attached to RCEOs and because, at one time, the

federal government eliminated funding for certain classifications of offenders. In addition, the federal government also eliminated funding for higher education courses in correctional institutions.

However, the Second Chance Act now provides funding for pilot programs in prisons. The views and perspectives of the study participants are generalizable, opening the possibilities for colleges and universities to educate RCEOs. According to the literature, the higher the educational levels, the lower recidivism. As RCEOs obtain higher education degrees, they become responsible citizens and contribute to society. Likewise, providing educational opportunities to RCEOs enables colleges and universities to practice university social responsibility. The development of collaborative relationships with probation and parole agencies, corrections facilities, and community organizations demonstrates the effectiveness of collaborative theory. Consistent with Collaborative Theory, organizations can work together to educate and support RCEOs resulting in safer campuses and communities.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Interview Questions**

#### **General Information**

1. What is the title of your current position at the university?
2. How long have you worked in the position?
3. What are the responsibilities of your job as \_\_\_\_\_?
4. Did you have previous experience in a similar role? If so, describe that experience?

#### **Views towards Ex-Offender Applicants**

5. What is your view towards ex-offender applicants?
6. Understanding of Admissions Policy for Ex-Offender Applicants
7. Do you know if there is a policy related to the admissions of ex-offenders?
8. Can you describe how and where to locate the policy?
9. Describe your understanding of the policy.

#### **Experience Processing Ex-Offender Applications**

10. Describe your experience processing the admissions applications of ex-offenders, if any?
11. What types of crimes have the ex-offenders seeking admissions completed?
12. What types of applications were approved for admissions?
13. What types of applications were denied?
14. What are the bases of the admission or denial of admission?

#### **Recommendations related to Policy re Ex-Offenders**

15. Do you have any suggestions or recommendations related to the admissions policy related to ex-offenders? If so, what?

16. Do you have suggestions related to the implementation of the admissions policy related to ex-offenders? If so, what?

## Vitae

### Donna Osborne Bradley, PhD, JD

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 donna.michelle.bradley@gmail.com  
 314-229-7803

Innovative and visionary educational and legal professional with 13+ years of administration, leadership, teaching, and service experience at different institutional types, including private and public 4-year and 2-year institutions. Proven record of successfully managing and directing the overall functions of the academic division, including directors, faculty, staff, and students. Accomplished at relationship building, public speaking, curricula development, academic coaching, critical thinking, budget oversight, and budget management. Value and committed to academic excellence, faculty, staff and student success, community, service, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

## EDUCATION

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- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>JD</b>  | Howard University School of Law   |
| <b>PhD</b> | Capella University, Public Safety and Criminal Justice Graduated with Distinction (4.0)<br>Dissertation: <i>"Comparing Police Performance at Union and Non-Union Municipal Departments"</i> |
| <b>EdD</b> | Lindenwood University<br>Dissertation: <i>"A Case Study: The College Admissions Process for Returning Citizens and Ex-Offenders"</i> (In progress)  |
| <b>MS</b>  | Columbia College, Criminal Justice Administration Graduated with Distinction (4.0)<br>Thesis: <i>"The Impact of Monitored Judicial Discretion on Racial Disparity in Sentencing"</i>        |
| <b>BS</b>  | Brown University, Political Science Minor: Sociology  |

## EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

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Special Assistant to the President

Strategic and DEI Initiatives

Eureka College, Eureka, IL

2022-Present

Provides leadership and oversight of the College's strategic initiatives, including grant management, student success, inclusive excellence and other sustained growth efforts as directed by the president and in collaboration with the senior leadership team.

- Serve as grant manager and liaison of the College's IT Workforce Accelerator Good Jobs grant sub-award.
- Promote and help to sustain the culture necessary for the College to execute and accomplish its strategic objectives.
- Work in collaboration with the College's leadership team to identify and implement student success, institutional sustainability, and sustained growth initiatives.

- Collaborate with the College's Inclusive Excellence Director to develop and oversee programs, services, and initiatives designed to enhance the recruitment and successful retention of students, faculty, and staff from diverse and under-represented groups, to create a welcoming and inclusive campus community, and to maintain regulatory compliance
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement and assessment in key areas that foster sustained growth.
- Serve as a resource to strengthen the College's wraparound support for students.
- Serve as a member of the President's Cabinet.
- Serve as a liaison for the President to various associations and professional organizations as needed.
- Represent the College by speaking at select events.
- May opt to teach one course per semester in area(s) of expertise.
- Other duties and responsibilities to advance the mission and vision of the College.

#### Provost and Academic Vice President

Lead Faculty, Criminal Justice

Lincoln College, Lincoln, IL

2019-2022

- Supervises 200+ employees.
- Ensures fiscal accountability for the academic department.
- Manages a multi-million-dollar budget.
- Manages projects and grants, including retention projects, Title III grant, and PBI grant.
- Directs, monitors, and evaluates the activities of the academic department directors and staff.
- Ensures compliance with institutional, departmental, and division policies and guidelines.
- Supervises the daily operation of the academic department, including the setting of individual, departmental, and division goals.
- Established systems of accountability to ensure the progress and attainment of individual, departmental, and division goals.
- Promotes collaboration between departments and divisions.
- Approves division budgets, payroll and other financial transactions, and timesheets.
- Addresses faculty, staff, parent, community, and student complaints pursuant to established policies in a professional, sensitive, and caring manner.
- Maintains accurate records related to complaints, including logs, timelines, response time, and other relevant data, referring to the appropriate department if unresolved and requiring additional investigation.
- Received, reviewed, and resolved student complaints related to alleged incidents of discrimination, disparity, mistreatment, or unfairness.
- Supervises the Office of Disability Services, ensuring that any complaints are investigated and resolved.
- Created the Accessibility, Belonging, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (ABIDE) committee to provide education and inclusion of students that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, or gender non-conforming.
- Supervises and oversees the Information Technology department to ensure the availability of current resources, technical assistance, and support to the campus community, including faculty, staff, students, parents, and the community.

- Stays abreast of current legislation that affects the institution and the academic department.
- Establishes and oversees dual-credit programs with high schools.
- Negotiates and provides oversight of articulation agreements with community colleges, professional schools, such as chiropractic, law, and nursing programs.
- Exercises judgment and discretion effectively.
- Adept at time management, including the management of timelines.
- Communicates efficaciously orally and in writing.

**Program Director, Graduate Criminal Justice  
Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO**

2016-2019

- Provided oversight of the graduate criminal justice program.
- Developed and implemented new curricula.
- Conducted program and course assessments.
- Hired, trained, evaluated, and observed full-time and adjunct faculty.
- Prepared course schedules and assignments.
- Advised undergraduate and graduate criminal justice students
- Taught undergraduate and graduate criminal justice courses
- Provided detailed feedback to students on content, writing mechanics, and APA formatting.
- Participated in university activities, including graduation, recruitment events, and community outreach, among others.
- Created and maintained Canvas shells for courses, student, and faculty communities
- Organized and developed training and professional development opportunities for students and adjunct faculty
- Served on university academic committees.

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**OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Adjunct Teaching**

2012-Present

St. Charles Community College  
Maryville University  
Lindenwood University  
Webster University  
Columbia College

**Executive Assistant/Program Director**

Jubilee Community Church/Jubilee Christian Development Corporation

1997-2013

**Attorney/Legal Investigation and Litigation**

1981-1996

Defense Logistics Agency  
Peete, Higgs, and Armstrong  
National Labor Relations Board

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**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

- Alpha Chi Honor Society
- Research Gate
- National Association of Professional Women

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## COMMUNITY SERVICE

### **The Links, Incorporated**

Recording Secretary

### **Delta Sigma Theta, Incorporated**

Fundraising Chair

### **Westside Community Church**

Leader and Volunteer

First Step Team, Online Worship Greeter, Small Group Leader

### **St. Charles Juvenile Justice Center**

Assessment Team Member

### **St. Louis Juvenile Justice Center**

Assessment Team Member

### **St. Martin's Childcare Center**

Board Member

### **Bridge of Hope Ministries**

Board Member

### **Community Liaison**

Organized and conducted community forums to improve the relationship between Lincoln College and the community, including the police department, local businesses, local government, and citizens.

## HONORS AND AWARDS

Excellence in Teaching and Outstanding Service Award

NSLS Leadership Award

Columbia College Professional Achievement Award

Donna Osborne Bradley Diversity & Inclusion Scholarship

St. Mary's Alumnae of the Year

Unsung Heroine Award

## Five Reasons

My name is Gary Davis and my wife Karen and I have lived in Logan County since 1987. We have been active in local politics and we are members of Lincoln's First Presbyterian Church, which lives out a mission to prisoners guided by chapter 25 of the Gospel of Matthew.

In the 25th chapter of Matthew Christians are commanded to "visit the prisoner." We have followed that commandment and have underwritten college tuition expenses for several women incarcerated at LCC. With the help of our church, several incarcerated women have completed their associate degrees.

With regard to an imagined lack of Logan County resources, we have found just the opposite to be true. Whenever our prison ministries have suffered from lack of resources, the problem was not the lack of local resources. It was the lack of resources from the Department of Corrections. For example, it once took more than six months for the State to approve the prison ministry of a local Roman Catholic priest. On another occasion officials at IDOC refused to accept the donation of greeting cards for inmate use. This was after the cards had earlier been solicited by prison authorities.

Whenever the Department of Corrections has been willing to support the use of local resources, we in Logan County have been happy to become involved in serving the prison and its population. Because of LCC's central role in our economic life, it is natural for Logan County citizens to want to play a vital role in the lives of persons incarcerated at LCC.

Here are five important reasons that Logan County is better than Will County as a future site for a new prison:

1. Logan County is closer to the state's prison employees training center.
2. A complete competent staff is present in Logan County. Were the new prison built over a hundred miles away from Lincoln very few of the existing staff would drive to Will County to continue their employment at a

women's prison there. A new staff would have to be hired and trained from scratch.

3. Prices are lower in Logan County. Logan County has lower real estate prices, lower construction costs and lower costs for the operation of a new prison.

4. Logan has an ample array of support resources. for example, the First Presbyterian Church has funded college tuition costs incurred by LCC inmates. We have also supported visits by Chicago based family members.

5. To the degree that the building of a new prison might be considered part of the Governor's push for economic growth, there is no question that a new prison in Logan County would have a much higher relative impact on the local economy than would a rebuild in Will County. To repeat: in Logan County the building of a new prison would have a dramatic effect. In Will County a prison construction project would create only a minimal relative effect.

The importance of LCC for Logan County cannot be overestimated. Will County is already scheduled to get a new men's prison. Added responsibility for the addition of a replacement for LCC would be more of a bother than a blessing.

We support the notion of a new women's prison, one able to support the State's constitutional responsibility to rehabilitate prisoners. Today I ask for an honest comparison of future locations for the rebuild. I am confident that when and if decision makers decide where a new prison will go, they will choose Logan County.

Gary Davis  
11 Illini Drive  
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