

Dear appropriations subcommittee members:

I am a member of the American friends service committee, prism creative arts project, caps, my cure, am I CCD, citizensforprisonreform and a member of a 30,000 member church. I'm very active in the prison ministry there.

More importantly, I'm speaking for myself, not any of these groups.

I have visited prisons over 800 times, taught classes at U of M, WSU, and been on panels at MSU, Northern Michigan University, Uof M Flint, U of M Detroit, and several other venues around the state of Michigan.

I have also visited all of the prisons in the upper Peninsula as well as most of the prisons in the lower peninsula.

I have several areas that I feel need to be addressed by appropriations subcommittee :

1. Food. I have seen the meals there. I've smelled the meals there. The smell alone is enough to make one vomit. Looking at it doesn't help. The caloric intake is even questionable, and certainly comes from primarily from poor quality fat and carbohydrates. The food pyramid recommended by the US government for health is nowhere represented in those meals. Whatever the fatty meat was, it was fried and processed so that it was beyond recognition.

The food quality has obviously worsened a great deal since privatization. The Trinity contract is even worse than the Aramark contract in terms of quality. That impacts directly healthcare. It creates unrest. Not to mention odor throughout... the presence of gas... Human gas... Which one can only imagine. That can't be healthy.

If you wish to confirm this, simply visit unannounced.

2. Healthcare. This is impacted directly by food. Insufficient vitamins, fiber, enzymes, and known and unknown essential fats, vitamins, minerals, are not present in potatoes, lard, and processed meat. This is a known driver of diabetes and heart disease. Two of the most expensive areas in healthcare in the department.

Healthcare is also impacted directly by poor diagnostics. There is extreme evidence of this, especially involving such problems as hernias, mental health, and numerous other diseases. I can provide data. ...Although that is extremely difficult.... As I believe Healthcare Services purposely misdiagnoses in order to keep costs low. This is a fact, not an opinion. Lawsuits will doubtless be going up as people are impacted even more in these areas.

3. Programming because of the extreme closing of prisons, and the extreme overcrowding in the level one facilities. There is no space to provide even free workshops from local colleges and volunteers. In talking to special activities directors, Those who care, have come in that repeatedly that space is much of the issue. The overcrowding in the level one facilities impact safety and health.

There is simply not enough recreational areas nor privacy opportunities. If you consider privacy as a part of health... The need to have some quiet in the day is not possible in the level one facility and barely

possible in other levels. This increases violence as there is never a time to reflect on ones self and one's goals and behaviors.

These are simply three issues that are important. Safe safety is related to all three of these areas. Tasers are not a good answer as they only protect the staff.

I urge you to visit the facilities as I have. Unannounced visits. ,, Smell the meals... If you can choke one down I'd like to know your opinion.

Go unannounced and get a tour by one of the staff. Ask about programming. Especially free volunteer programming. Who encourages it and who doesn't have it?

Places like Newberry have begged groups like ours to come back. The inmates have raved about the workshops as it breaks the monotony of the day and allows them positive outlets and positive visions for their future.

Solutions? Yes. Increase free programming. Find space, particularly in the evenings. Increased visit days so families can visit. Allow individual inmates to grow food. Allow the facilities to grow food. Get rid of private food companies and allow bidding for local produce as was present before this administration get away with it. Look at the whole picture of health... Food directly impacts disease. Exercise directly impacts disease. Thought processes and hope and learning directly impact depression... Which impacts disease. These things don't cost much, if anything, utilizing volunteer labor for programming. And inmates to Grow some of the fresh food... Call it for snacks until you did the private food service mistake.

There used to be fruit trees on the grounds. All of these things make for an easier and better life. And it's not costly.

I'll be glad to donate money towards this Cause.

Where there is no vision, there is no hope.

People need time and opportunity for vision. And privacy.

Dr Jim Dankovich