

Joseph D. Lehman, Acting Secretary  
Pennsylvania Department of Corrections  
House Judiciary Committee Public Hearing  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
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CHAIRMAN CALTAGIRONE AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO PERSONALLY ADDRESS THIS COMMITTEE SO EARLY IN MY TENURE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS.

I AM SCHEDULED TO RECEIVE A PUBLIC HEARING BY THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE NEXT TUESDAY, JUNE 5TH, AND HOPE TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE SOMETIME SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

MY PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS REFLECT MY 21-YEAR COMMITMENT TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM. I AM CONFIDENT THAT I CAN MEET THE MANY DIFFICULT CHALLENGES THAT LAY AHEAD FOR BOTH THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

AS A DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR THE WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, I ASSISTED THE SECRETARY IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF ALL OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PROGRAMS, INCLUDING COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS AND PRISON OPERATIONS. MY MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE HAVE ALLOWED ME TO BE INVOLVED IN EVERY ASPECT OF CORRECTIONS, RANGING FROM THE MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS AND INSTITUTIONS TO A PRISON SYSTEM. I BELIEVE IT IS THIS BREADTH OF EXPERIENCE THAT WILL ENABLE ME TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA AND ITS CORRECTIONAL AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS.

I WAS INITIALLY CONTACTED BY FORD WEBB ASSOCIATES OF CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS, AN EXECUTIVE SEARCH AND MANAGEMENT CONSULTING FIRM SPECIALIZING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR, TO DETERMINE MY INTEREST IN THIS POSITION. ON APRIL 18TH, GOVERNOR CASEY NOMINATED ME TO HEAD THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS.

I CAME TO PENNSYLVANIA SEVEN MONTHS AFTER THE PUBLIC SAW INMATES AT THE STATE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION AT CAMP HILL DESTROY A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE PRISON IN THE MIDST OF THIS STATE'S MOST CRITICAL OVERCROWDING PROBLEM. CURRENTLY, THE DEPARTMENT IS OPERATING AT 158 PERCENT OF ITS HOUSING CAPACITY AND CONTINUES TO EXPERIENCE A NET INCREASE OF MORE THAN 200 INMATES EACH MONTH. OUR INMATE POPULATION NOW TOTALS MORE THAN 21,700.

THIS COMMITTEE HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN A THOROUGH REVIEW OF THE DISTURBANCE AT THE CAMP HILL INSTITUTION, AS WELL AS SEVERAL OTHER LESS SERIOUS INCIDENTS. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE COMMITTEE'S RECORD OF THESE EVENTS IS COMPLETE. MY TIME WITH YOU TODAY WILL BE, I BELIEVE, BEST SPENT BY BRIEFLY DETAILING WHAT HAS OCCURRED SINCE MY ARRIVAL.

THE STATE POLICE HAVE NOW BEEN REMOVED FROM INSIDE CAMP HILL'S SECURITY PERIMETER AND RELOCATED TO IMMEDIATELY OUTSIDE THE MAIN GATE TO ENSURE THEIR CAPACITY TO RESPOND IN A TIMELY FASHION. THEY ARE EXTREMELY VISIBLE DURING THEIR CONTINUOUS PERIMETER PATROLS IN VEHICLES AND ON FOOT. A NUMBER OF SIMULATED EXERCISES WERE CONDUCTED TO ENSURE THAT THE STATE POLICE ARE ABLE TO RESPOND IMMEDIATELY. BASED ON THOSE EXERCISES, AS WELL AS THE RECENT INCIDENTS IN D BLOCK, SUPERINTENDENT BEARD AND THE STATE POLICE ARE CONFIDENT OF THE STATE POLICE ABILITY TO RESPOND SWIFTLY TO INCIDENTS THAT MIGHT ARISE INSIDE THE PERIMETER OF THE INSTITUTION.

CAMP HILL IS SLOWLY BEING REBUILT. ALREADY A PENNSYLVANIA BASED COMPANY IS DELIVERING STEEL REINFORCED PRE-CAST CONCRETE CELLS TO CAMP HILL. THE FIRST OF FIVE PLANNED MAXIMUM-SECURITY MODULAR UNITS FOR CAMP HILL IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY AUGUST. SITE PREPARATION AND FOUNDATION WORK HAS ALREADY BEEN COMPLETED. DURING THE WEEK OF APRIL 23RD, TWO DISTURBANCES WITHIN THE

INSTITUTION'S RESTRICTED HOUSING UNIT DEMONSTRATED THAT THE STRUCTURE OF THE EXISTING HOUSING UNITS IS FRAGILE. AS AN INTERIM MEASURE, I HAVE ORDERED THAT ALL 128 CELLS OF D BLOCK BE REINFORCED WITH STEEL PLATING AND METAL SCREENING. THIS IS BEING DONE TO ENSURE STAFF SAFETY. IT ALSO SENDS A STRONG SIGNAL TO THE INMATES: THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS STAFF IS AND WILL BE IN CONTROL.

AFTER PERSONALLY INSPECTING MANY OF THE STATE'S PRISONS, I AM PAINFULLY AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS THAT CONFRONT THE COMMONWEALTH AND THIS DEPARTMENT EVERY DAY. I DO NOT SAY THIS LIGHTLY - I CONGRATULATE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S EMPLOYEES. THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THIS SYSTEM AND, FRANKLY, THEY ARE WHAT IS HOLDING THE SYSTEM TOGETHER. HOWEVER WE NEED HELP FROM THE COURTS, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE PAROLE BOARD.

I HAVE ALREADY MET WITH LEADERS OF THE STATE'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND NUMEROUS MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THEY HAVE INDICATED A WILLINGNESS AND COMMITMENT TO ADDRESS THE MANY CONCERNS THAT CONFRONT US DAILY.

IN THE NEAR FUTURE I WILL BE CONTACTING MANY OF YOU PRIVATELY TO RECOGNIZE YOUR PAST INTEREST IN CORRECTIONS AND TO ASK FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE IN THE FUTURE. I LOOK FORWARD TO THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH THIS COMMITTEE AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN RESPONDING TO THE MANY CHALLENGES THAT FACE OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.

AGAIN, I APPRECIATE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THIS COMMITTEE AND WOULD BE HAPPY TO RESPOND TO ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.