

Good morning Chairman and members of the House Judiciary Committee.

I am Frank Rittenhouse, a correctional officer and member of the Legislative Committee at SCI Graterford.

I want to thank you for allowing me to speak today on House Bill 2278. I have been a correctional officer for about 2 years.

I want you to know, how I and other correctional officers feel about this bill. Most are in favor of this very positive change for correctional officers.

The passage of this bill will bring the PA DOC forward into the millenium prepared to meet and prevail over the mounting challenges of a prison population which is experiencing exponential growth.

We want to have the PA DOC to be the best in the nation. I think Secretary Horn would feel the same way...I know I would if I was Secretary of Corrections.

-This Bill 2278 will bring recognition to correctional officers as law enforcement professionals within the PA DOC.

-HB 2278 will give the Commonwealth approximately 8000 more peace officers.

-This bill will help remove some of the burden from the state police in regard to incidents that occur at state correctional institutes.

-This Bill 2278 WILL help in keeping cost down.

-Correctional officers in Pa will get the additional training needed to perform the tough job they have now .

-The Correctional officer can help in states of emergency affecting the communities that surround their Institutions.

As a Civil Service employee, taxpayer and voter in this great Commonwealth, I take pride in my job and in my citizen responsibilities.

John Rockefeller, once said in a 1941 speech;

"I believe that every right implies a responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation; every possession, a duty. "

As in Corrections, professionalism is not just a uniform, it's what's inside the uniform.