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Testimony:

Testimony for Correction Advisory Committee

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Hello and thank you for taking the time out to listen to all of our concerns regarding conditions inside of the prison system.

I would first like to address my experiences with medical. The wait time to be seen is ridiculous. There were a few times where I had the flu or whatever new virus was going around at the time and I asked to be seen by medical. Their response was write a request however I needed immediate attention and when they finally called me like 2 or 3 weeks later, thankfully it had passed. People have passed away in their custody because when someone tells them about their symptoms sometimes cancer related, they take a while to even address it and even then it isn't always properly either. Then after you harass them for a year or two, it's too late and you're basically on your way to meet your maker. Their standard go to solution seems to be to give us ibuprofens for just about everything. This needs to change.

I would also like to address recreation. I'm currently housed in MacDougall in Unit J2 where there are industry workers, the dog program, and tiermen. This is primarily a working block. We work Monday through Friday from 7am-6pm if there is overtime and we also go to school. We do the right thing, work all day, go to school but we hardly ever get our outside recreation or gym recreation because whenever there is a code or a trip they always seem to pull our rec officer. We work hard to be where we're at. Believe me it's not easy. There are so many variables on a daily basis that affect us but we keep our heads held high and keep moving forward to positive goals. We need some consistency with our outside rec and by consistency I mean everyday. There are many of us who are currently or have been Vitamin D deficient because of lack of sunlight. In other words we need to go outside and get some natural sunlight.

They need a whole menu reconstruction for the food that's served and focus more on healthier foods with less fat, sugar, and carbs. They also need to STOP THE SLOP!!!! No one hardly eats it and it looks like dog food. It's a waste of taxpayer money to have all this food wasted because quite frankly gross and I bet they wouldn't want to eat it.

Commissary also needs to focus on healthier food items and whoever works in the security division that stops them from selling us items like fruit cups because they fear people will make jailhouse wine well news flash, people can make that stuff with anything so why keep us from eating healthier when your reasons don't even make sense. They don't sell us clean water either because the security division said they don't want us to have bottles. That's funny to me because I currently have shampoo bottles, lotion bottles, pink moisturizer bottles, shower gel bottles, etc... Do you see how much sense that makes?? That's right it doesn't. I know they have to do their jobs but come on, some stuff they come up with is just plain ridiculous. I'm not saying that I only want them to add fruit cups and water to commissary, I just used that as an example but how come other states have a variety of items or even let their loved ones send them approved food packages which would alleviate the high pricing of commissary items. If they do it in other states and we're supposedly progressive, then why do we always seem to be behind. That goes for the juvenile bill as well but I won't get into that right now.

I'm also trying to understand why we can't rent Rated R movies like "The Odyssey" but they'll let us rent kiddie movies like Ugly Dolls or Shark Tales. I find that odd for grown men to be renting kiddie movies and let alone edited movies. Other states can rent rated R movies and rent TV shows that they have on Starz and Netflix so why not us? We need more channels to watch too. Let us rent Netflix movies for a fixed price. The state will profit from it and I can guarantee you that if people had real good shows to watch there would be less issues and it would be easier on your officers too. Whether they admit it or not, there are many officers that agree with it. They would much rather have us in a relaxed state watching some good shows making their jobs easier because we got to look out for our officers too, including paying them better. A lot of them are mad all the time because they work 16 hour shifts and are still just making ends meet and guess who has to feel it..... WE DO!! So please pay them more too or give them better benefits or something. (We need more pay too by the way. I'm grateful to have a job but let's be honest we're still getting paid slave wages.) Not all officers are bad or mad all the time. Some I don't care for because of their negative disposition but there are some who are actually decent people. Just like on our side. Not all of us are evil. Some of us just made mistakes, some worse than others. Whether you're a Correctional Officer or an Incarcerated Individual it is mentally challenging behind these walls so let's do something that's mutually beneficial. We all here together.

We need some help with our video visits. We need better equipment, better training for our officers who are conducting the video visits, and better scheduling so we don't have to have so many of our visits cancelled due to technical difficulties.