

Rudy Stock
P. O. Box 944
Helena, MT 59624

Cell Phone: 406-431-8886 e-mail address: rstockcabinets@mt.net

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Senator Jim Shockley, Chairman
Law and Justice Interim Committee
P. O. Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706

Dear Senator Shockley,

Thank you for your letter of October 24, 2011, concerning my testimony at the Law and Justice Interim Committee on September 9, 2011. I am pleased that you added your name to the list of legislators who have requested a legislative audit.

Before I talked to the Committee on September 9th I had concerns about the prison because my son has been an inmate at the Crossroads Correctional Center (CCC) since February 1, 2011. Information about the prison came from him and from inmate's families and friends who I have met at the prison after visiting hours. Many of us keep in contact with each other by phone and e-mails on a regular basis. We discuss concerns about the prison and want a safe place for our loved ones until their release. Of course, the only part of the prison the visitors see, including my wife and me, is the entrance and the visiting room. Our information about the prison comes from the inmates who reside there. If you and other legislators visited the prison, you would be allowed to see more and visit with inmates.

Here is an example of an "unsafe situation" at the prison according to my son. On Friday, November 4th at about 7:00 a.m., a prison inmate was attacked and stabbed by other inmates. We were told that he was taken to a hospital outside the Shelby area. The cell-mate, of the man stabbed, tried to help his cell-mate and was badly cut and was transported to the Shelby hospital. My son was on prison lockdown all day on November 4th. Are there enough guards on duty at all times to provide a safe place?

Concerning Vocational Programs at the prison – At the time I talked to the Committee in September, I was not aware of any programs, because my son was not aware of any. My son had not met anyone in his Pod who was participating in any Vocational Program. The Contract states "*The Contractor must provide sufficient vocational courses for a minimum of 20% of the inmate population.*" (page 27, "B", bottom of page). Bob Anez, DOC responded with "The prison provides computer skills and wood-working/carpentry vocational programs." If there are approximately 550 inmates at CCC and if 20% are in vocational courses – that would mean that 110 inmates should be learning computer skills and wood-working/carpentry. What is the actual number taking courses at this time? What are the vocational courses offered at MSP and how do they compare to the two courses offered at CCC?

On the bottom of page 28 of the Contract, it states “*The recreational program will include indoor, **outdoor**, and hobby activities.*” I saw “Attachment 6” from Bob Anez, of dates of delayed or closed rec. Is there a separate log for the number of days inmates are allowed outside? My son arrived at Crossroads on Feb. 1, 2011. When he was issued uniforms, he did **not** get a coat, which seemed odd, since he had a coat at Deer Lodge and had outside recreation during the fall and winter months. My son did not go outside at Crossroads from February until August when he attended the outside picnic. Now it’s November and he, along with other prisoners have been told it is too cold to be allowed outside. When my son was in S-Dorm, from February until the first week in May, where there are no windows – he could not go outdoors and he could not see outdoors for 3 months. Why doesn’t CCC provide coats, hats, and gloves for inmates so they can recreate outside during cold weather?

What are the recreational programs for indoor and outdoor activities? What hobbies are available for inmates?

Concerning staff vacancies and fines, Bob Anez answered the provision applies only when a position has been vacant more than 90 days. On page 19 of the Contract, it states that “if a position is left vacant for more than 30 days for security staff or 60 days for all other staff, the Contractor will incur a financial penalty.” My question remains – Is a fine charged and is it being deducted from CCC’s next payment?

I imagine there are rumors that circulate among inmates, according to Bob Anez, and get told to us outside the prison. We have no way of knowing if what we are told is a rumor or the truth. When we heard that our son was being served food from boxes labeled “not for human consumption” – we felt that it should be brought to the attention of someone who could look into the matter.

I have read “Attachment 5” the Nutrition Statement, that Bob Anez sent, stating that the menu was developed by Canteen Correctional Services for CCC. The analysis confirms that the written menu appears to be an adequate diet signed by a registered dietitian. My question – Is there ever an “on-site” visit by a registered dietitian to analyze the real food and portions served? Sometimes things look better on paper than in person.

I have tried to answer your questions. As you can see I have more questions concerning the prison in Shelby. I hope that you and other legislators will find time to visit CCC in the near future. Thank you and the Committee for listening to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Rudy Stock