

NANCY E. BOYDA  
2ND DISTRICT, KANSAS

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-1602

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
1711 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
PHONE: 202-225-6601  
FAX: 202-225-7986

TOPEKA OFFICE  
510 SW 10TH AVENUE  
TOPEKA, KS 66612  
PHONE: 785-234-8111  
FAX: 785-234-9111

PITTSBURG OFFICE  
701 N. BROADWAY, SUITE A  
PITTSBURG, KS 66762  
PHONE: 620-231-3011  
FAX: 620-231-4011

June 11, 2007

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Justice and Science and Related Agencies  
H-310 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Justice and Science and Related Agencies  
H-310 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Frelinghuysen:

As you complete the appropriations markup process, we strongly encourage you not to forget the Bureau of Prisons (BOP). The BOP is simultaneously experiencing record lows in staffing and record highs in overcrowding. This is dangerous combination that creates a situation that is simply not safe for our correctional officers or federal inmates.

We urge the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and Science and Related Agencies (CJS) to provide: **(1) \$427 million more for the BOP "salaries and expenses" account, and (2) \$410 million more for the BOP "buildings and facilities" account.** We have outlined briefly the specifics involved in the need for these two funding priorities.

*\$427 million in FY 2008 funding for the BOP "salaries and expenses" account is necessary to help remedy the serious correctional officer understaffing programs that plague the BOP prisons.*

Between 1990 and 2007, the federal prison inmate population increased by 239%. Unfortunately, the number of correctional officers could not keep up. During the same time period, staff increased by only 106%. Such a high level of understaffing has resulted in a significant increase in federal prison inmate assaults against both correctional staff and prison inmates. Between FY 2005 and FY 2006, the inmate-on-staff assaults increased by 6%. This type of unsafe work environment is simply an unacceptable position for our correctional officers to be in. Furthermore, it does not bode well for officer recruitment or retention.

*\$410 million in FY 2008 funding for the BOP "building and facilities" account is necessary to help remedy the serious prison inmate overcrowding problems that plague BOP institutions.*

As previously outlined, the federal prison population is rising rapidly. Yet, despite the expansion of many federal prisons, inmate overcrowding continues to be a serious problem. System-wide, BOP institutions today are overcrowded by about 37%, up from 31.7% as of January, 2000. In FY 2007, the House Appropriation Committee report included language that we believe reinforces the need for additional funds for buildings and facilities:

The Committee is concerned about the safety and morale of staff working in Federal prisons, and therefore believes that bringing additional bed space on-line in a timely manner is critical.

In order to continue managing the increasing prison population and providing a safe work environment for our correctional officers we need to provide the BOP with the necessary funding. This appropriations request is not a luxury, rather it is a necessity. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Nancy Boyda

R. D. Meene

Hank Johnson

Brad Ellmuth

T. Holder

John A. Lubiano

Tom Davis

J. Saxton