



The Guardian

News from the Hardworking Men and Women of DOC

Members of Teamsters Local 117

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Unanswered questions, concerns in OFM report

The draft report of an Office of Financial Management (OFM) feasibility study released on October 14 raises more questions than it answers and poses significant concerns for Teamsters at DOC and the communities they serve.

The Washington State Legislature mandated the OFM report in the last legislative session in an attempt to cut approximately \$12 million from DOC's budget in 2011. The mandate called for a report that would recommend the elimination of 1,580 beds.

Consultants on the State's payroll

The OFM hired the consultant group, Christopher Murray & Associates, to conduct the study.

The consultant's report recommends enacting one of two options that may lead to the elimination of inmate beds at the Department of Corrections. If one of the options were to be adopted by the legislature, a loss of approximately 300-400 Teamster jobs would likely result.

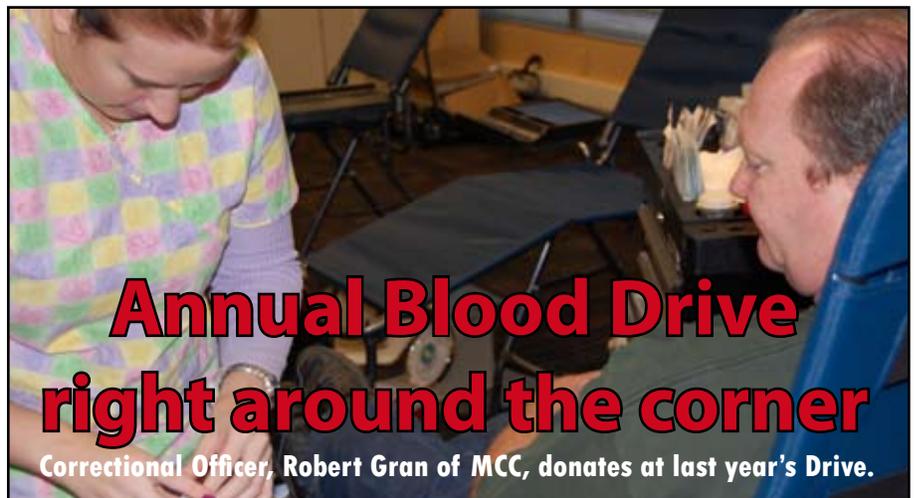
The consultants recommend the following:

- **OPTION #1:** Close the Main Institution (the old walled Penitentiary) at Walla Walla,

and possibly three additional custody units there. The IMU, the minimum-security unit and the administration buildings would remain open. Under this scenario, the consultants recommend a 50 percent reduction in the number of beds at Larch.

- **OPTION #2:** Downsize the McNeil Island Corrections Center (MICC) and convert MICC to a 512-bed minimum security facility. Under this scenario, the Larch Corrections Center would

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Annual Blood Drive right around the corner

Correctional Officer, Robert Gran of MCC, donates at last year's Drive.

Time to tap your veins! The 20th Annual Local 117 Blood Drive is right around the corner. The event will take place on November 21 from 8 A.M. to 2 P.M. at the Union hall in Tukwila. All participants who donate blood at the Drive will receive a \$25 Safeway gift card as a thank you from your Local Union.

DOC members who donate their blood at a local Blood Bank anywhere in the state between November 14 and November 28 will be eligible for the gift card upon presentation of proof of donation. Make your donation in benefit of the Local 117 Blood Drive. Give the gift of life!

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be closed along with two units at the penitentiary in Walla Walla.

The report also recommends the closure of the Ahtanum View Corrections Center (AVCC) in Yakima in conjunction with either one of the two options, with the AVCC inmates to be transferred to a minimum-security unit at the Monroe Corrections Complex (MCC). (AVCC is not a Teamster facility.)

Methodology in question

The consultants said they considered several factors in recommending closure options, including inmate population forecasts and the effect of closures on DOC employees and the surrounding communities.

Despite this claim, however, the

report makes only passing reference to the input provided by Community Task Force stakeholders in Walla Walla, Lakewood, and Monroe, and only cursory mention of the impact the elimination of inmate beds will have on surrounding communities.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the report is that it doesn't take into account the effect the economic downturn of the last two years may have on recidivism. The consultants base their report on a projected dip in incarceration rates over the next two years. It seems reasonable to assume that the recidivism rate will be higher in a down economy. We put our communities at risk if we do not have the bed capacity in our prisons for repeat offenders,

Additionally, the report raises a number of other questions including:

- How will the final version of the report differ from the current draft version?

- How will the Governor's office respond to the report and will the Governor incorporate the report's recommendations into next year's budget?
- How will new budget projections affect the perception of the report in the Washington State Legislature?

Given these uncertainties, your Local Union has requested the source documents upon which the report is based so that we can continue to analyze its underlying assumptions. In the coming weeks, we will be taking our public safety message to the Washington State Legislature and the Governor's office to ensure that your rights are protected and our communities are kept safe.

Stay informed by monitoring your Local Union's website at www.teamsters117.org for updates.



Teamsters for Tomorrow Planning Youth Summit

The Teamsters for Tomorrow (members 35 years-old and under) are planning the first-ever Teamsters Local 117 Youth Summit to be held on Saturday, November 7, 2009 from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M. at the Union hall in Tukwila.

Topics for the Summit include getting to know your union; financial planning; balancing work, friends and family life; and bridging the generation gap.

Local 117 has organized a group of young Teamster leaders who have been meeting to plan the event. Event organizers have been visiting DOC institutions over the past several weeks to promote the Summit.

Featured speakers at the event are financial planning expert, Lesley Scorgie, author of *Rich by 30*, who will talk about how members can get their finances in order and grow their net worth. Gary Hattal of the

Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) will lead members in a workshop on bridging the generation gap.

To register for the event, go to the Teamsters for Tomorrow section of the Local 117 website at www.teamsters117.org.