
Government of the District of Columbia



Department of Corrections

Testimony

**Thomas Faust
Director**

**D.C. Department of Corrections
Performance Oversight Hearing**

Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary
Phil Mendelson, Chair
Council of the District of Columbia

John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004
Room 412

February 29, 2012
10:00 a.m.

GOOD AFTERNOON CHAIRMAN MENDELSON AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY. I AM THOMAS FAUST, DIRECTOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS. JOINING ME AT THE TABLE ARE MY DEPUTY DIRECTORS, CAROLYN CROSS, AND TOM HOEY. I THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE TESTIMONY TODAY AND ADDRESS QUESTIONS REGARDING THE DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN FISCAL YEAR 2011 AND 2012 TO DATE.

IT HAS BEEN NEARLY FIVE MONTHS SINCE MAYOR VINCENT GRAY APPOINTED ME TO LEAD THE DEPARTMENT IN A NEW DIRECTION. WHILE IT'S BEEN A RELATIVELY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, I'VE COME TO UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT CULTURE AND CHALLENGES WE FACE AS AN AGENCY, WHILE ALSO RECOGNIZING THE PROGRESS DOC CAN AND WILL MAKE IN MOVING FORWARD. I ALSO WANT TO THANK

YOU, CHAIRMAN MENDELSON FOR YOUR ADVICE AND SUPPORT OF NEEDED CHANGES.

THE MISSION OF DOC IS CRITICAL TO PUBLIC SAFETY IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND CONTRIBUTES TO THE HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITIES. AS A CRITICAL COMPONENT OF THE DISTRICT'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM, EACH YEAR OUR WORKFORCE PROVIDES FOR THE SECURE CARE AND CUSTODY OF APPROXIMATELY 12,500 PRE-TRIAL DETAINEES, SENTENCED MISDEMEANANTS, FELONS AND PAROLE VIOLATORS.

AS DIRECTOR OF THIS DEPARTMENT MY PRIMARY FOCUS IN THIS FIRST YEAR IS TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH CONSTRUCTIVE CHANGE CAN TAKE PLACE, AND GIVE

MISSION CLARITY BASED ON ACCOUNTABILITY, INTEGRITY,
AND A FOCUS ON CUSTOMER AND PUBLIC SERVICE.

IN EFFECTING CHANGE IN ANY ORGANIZATION, STAFF MUST
TRUST THAT THEY ARE VALUED AND HEARD. WITH THAT
SAID, SINCE I BEGAN FIVE MONTHS AGO, I HAVE MADE A
COMMITMENT TO GAINING BUY-IN AND DEDICATION TO
CULTURAL CHANGE THROUGH HANDS ON INVOLVEMENT IN
DAY TO DAY OPERATIONS AND OPEN COMMUNICATION. BY
ESTABLISHING A PRESENCE IN THE JAIL, I HAVE AND WILL
CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY PROBLEMS AND MAKE THE
CHANGES NECESSARY TO IMPROVE MORALE,
PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY; OPEN UP PREVIOUSLY
BROKEN LINES OF COMMUNICATION; AND DEMONSTRATE
FLEXIBILITY IN ADDRESSING THE ISSUES AND PROBLEMS
STAFF ENCOUNTER IN THE DAY TO DAY PERFORMANCE OF
THEIR DUTIES.

OUR FOCUS GOING FORWARD SUPPORTS MY OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES WHICH INCLUDE ESTABLISHING A WELL DEFINED PLAN FOR FISCAL MANAGEMENT; INSTITUTING PROCEDURAL CHANGES TO REDUCE AND ELIMINATE OVERDETENTIONS AND IMPROPER RELEASES; PROACTIVELY MANAGING THE JAILS' LOCAL AND FEDERAL POPULATIONS; ESTABLISHING A VIABLE RE-ENTRY STRATEGY FOR BOTH MALE AND FEMALE OFFENDERS; AND ASSESSING AND RESTRUCTURING THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT SUPPORT OUR OFFENDER POPULATION.

IN SUPPORT OF THESE OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES, WE ARE MOVING FORWARD AGGRESSIVELY. MEETINGS WITH OUR FEDERAL PARTNERS CONTINUE IN ORDER TO ENSURE THEIR COOPERATION WITH DOC'S POPULATION MANAGEMENT GOALS IN WHICH WE HAVE MADE GREAT PROGRESS; AND RE-ESTABLISHING IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS WITH OUR COMMUNITY BASED STAKEHOLDERS. FOR THE FIRST TIME,

WE HAVE A RE-ENTRY COORDINATOR ON BOARD WHO IS WORKING TO ESTABLISH A VIABLE GENDER INFORMED PROGRAM SPECIFICALLY FOR OUR FEMALE OFFENDER POPULATION. OUR DEPARTMENTAL RE-ENTRY PROGRAM COORDINATOR POSITION HAS ALSO BEEN ADVERTISED WITH THE INTERVIEWING AND SELECTION PROCESS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY.

IN CLOSING, I AM FULLY COMMITTED TO LEADING THIS DEPARTMENT AND ESTABLISHING IT AS A BENCHMARK CORRECTIONS SYSTEM IN THE NATION'S CAPITOL, THROUGH WORKING COLLABORATIVELY WITH THE COMMUNITY, OUR STAKEHOLDERS AND THE DEDICATED MEN AND WOMEN OF THE DEPARTMENT TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL.