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*Ad Excelleum Conamur – “We Strive Towards Excellence”*

September 15, 2014

Honorable Jolie Justus  
Chair, Juvenile Justice Task Force  
Room 333, Capitol Building  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Honorable Ron Hicks  
Vice Chair, Juvenile Justice Task Force  
Room 115 F, Capitol Building  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Senator Justus and Representative Hicks:

The following questions were asked of the Department of Corrections by Representative LaFaver and other committee members during the Juvenile Justice Task Force hearing on August 6, 2014. Listed below are the responses to those questions.

1. Are the people who provide services to the juveniles (teachers, mental health, etc.) trained to deal with adolescents?

Staff who provide specific services to juveniles do have experience in working with juveniles in many instances. For example, most mental health staff have years of experience working with juveniles and some are formally trained in adolescent psychology. Educational staff have taught in classrooms within various school systems.

Corrections Officers who supervise the juvenile housing units from shift to shift do not have formal training related to juveniles. However, officers are aware of departmental policy and procedure and of PREA standards relating to juveniles.

2. What rights do juveniles and/or their parents have while they are incarcerated?

Once a child has been adjudicated as an adult, they are emancipated in all major aspects and are under the supervision of the Department of Corrections. They are emancipated for the purpose of decision-making and participation in all department programs and services, including but not limited to: medical care, mental health care, treatment programs, educational programs, work assignments, and rehabilitative programs. This only applies to post-conviction juveniles in the custody of the Department of Corrections.

3. Have there been any documented cases of physical/sexual assault by inmates on juveniles? Any accusations of abuse by staff?

- There has been one documented case where a juvenile offender sexually assaulted another juvenile offender.
- There are two documented cases where a juvenile offender assaulted another juvenile offender.
- There have been seven documented cases where juvenile offenders were involved in fighting.
- There are no documented cases or allegations where a juvenile offender was abused by staff.

4. How many suicide attempts have there been by juveniles? Were any successful?

During the past five years, eight offenders were placed on suicide watch or close observation status. All eight were placed on close observation or suicide watch as a precaution based on behavior, comments or out of staff concern. There have been no actual suicide attempts or any self-harming behavior.

Since the law was enacted in 1998, there has been one successful suicide by an offender who was being transferred from the juvenile unit to general population after reaching the age of 17.

5. For the last five years, how many times has a juvenile been placed in segregation and for what purpose?

Youthful offenders who demonstrate behavior problems, express protective custody needs, or who have a need to be segregated from the youthful offender population can be assigned to segregation. Those youthful offenders assigned to segregation are seen by psychologists and other staff in attempt to resolve issues and bring them out of segregation. Youthful offenders generally are not housed in a long-term, solitary confinement status. In the last five years, the department has assigned youthful offenders to segregation 48 times.