



**Illinois**  
Department of  
**Corrections**

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Director

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May 2, 2008

Honorable Arthur J. Wilhelmi  
State Senator, 43<sup>rd</sup> District  
2200 Weber Road  
Crest Hill, IL 60403

Dear Senator Wilhelmi:

As you know the Illinois Department of Corrections has proposed eliminating the use of the maximum security portion of the Stateville Correctional Center beginning in fiscal year 2009. My goal has been to put newer, more modern facilities into operation and decrease the reliance on older, less efficient ones. There has been much public discourse on this proposal in the form of legislative hearings and legislative tours of three of the facilities that will be impacted by this plan.

At our very first Senate hearing regarding the Stateville plan, I committed to continue reviewing options to achieve the goal of operating a safe, secure, and efficient prison system. In the months before and since the budget presentation I have spent a considerable amount of time and effort reviewing the operations of our facilities and the most viable ways to fulfill our mission. My staff and I still believe that opening the new, state-of-the-art Thomson facility is essential. However, we believe our goals can best be achieved at this time by keeping the maximum security portion of the Stateville Correctional Center open and by closing the Pontiac Correctional Center.

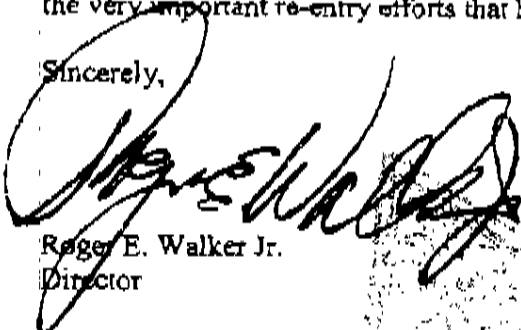
The fact that Thomson is a new, state-of-the-art facility dictates that it should play a major role in our future operations. I have been clear in expressing the challenges we face in the operation and management of our maximum security facilities. They are some of the oldest in the country. We must make choices about the best use of those facilities. The nature of the population at the Pontiac facility-- segregation, mental health, and protective custody-- calls for us to single-cell the majority of the inmates. Transferring this specialized inmate population from Pontiac to the Thomson facility will allow us to continue single-celling these inmates at the same time that we move to a more efficient facility and away from an older, less efficient one. The Stateville plan called for the

movement and increased double-celling of inmates, whereas this proposal will allow us to maximize single-celling.

As I pointed out in various legislative hearings, in fulfilling my responsibilities as Director of this agency, I remain committed to the continuous review of how we meet the challenges of operating older facilities that can be a drain on public resources.

I will continue to work with the General Assembly to implement a department budget that will allow us to focus on safety and security in our prisons. I am also committed to the very important re-entry efforts that have proven to be successful.

Sincerely,



Roger E. Walker Jr.  
Director