



Testimony on HB2214

Submitted To

The Senate Committee on Judiciary

By

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Kansas Department of Corrections

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The Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) appreciates the opportunity to offer our support for House Bill 2214. We requested the introduction of the bill and are a proponent.

We ask for your support to change the name of the Larned Correctional Mental Health Facility (LCMHF) to the Larned State Correctional Facility (LSCF) as the mission of that facility changed in 2016 but the name has remained the same. Changing the name was our reason for proposing this bill, in drafting the bill language some additional technical changes were identified, including:

- Removing the names facilities at Osawatomie and Toronto that were closed in the late 2000's
- Updating K.S.A. 75-5202 to include any juvenile correctional facility or institution and other correctional facility for confinement of adults or juveniles. Language that today is in K.S.A. 75-52,167 along with a parallel list of facility names that can be cleaned up to appear in only one statute.

The Larned Correctional Mental Health Facility (LCMHF) was constructed in response to a 1989 federal court order which directed the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) to meet the long-term needs of mentally ill residents. The site for construction of a new 150 bed facility was selected to co-locate these new prison mental health beds on the same campus as the separate Larned State Hospital. Construction began in 1991, with dedication of the facility in December of that year and the first residents housed there beginning on January 22, 1992.

As prison populations grew, additional projects at LCMHF and the use of the former Larned Juvenile Correctional Facility (LJCF) housing units for adults, result in the current housing capacity for 614 adult male residents. The former west unit, with an additional 288 beds, still stands on the grounds of the facility but is not in use due to low staffing levels and the benefits of the more modern LJCF buildings as part of our COVID-19 mitigation strategy.

By 2016, the facility had grown significantly in size and beyond the original purpose. And across the department 35% (N= 3,421) of our adult residents were identified as having some level of mental health or behavioral health need, well beyond the capacity of LCMHF. To address this need, between 1992 and 2016 capacity for this population had been developed at multiple KDOC facilities. Then in 2016, a decision was made to change the mission at LCMHF and move the specialized mental health population from LCMHF to the El Dorado Correctional Facility. A primary consideration was to move these specialized services closer to a major metropolitan area where more professionals with the needed skill sets to serve the population live.

Initially, LCMHF was repurposed to specialize in housing younger adult males between the ages of 18-25 with increased access to behavior change programs. Today, LCMHF houses medium and minimum custody adult male residents with an average age of 40, an average that is the same as the average for all adult male facilities (from low of 38 at El Dorado to high of 42 at Norton, Ellsworth and Winfield) in FY22.

For many years, the name, Larned Correctional Mental Health Facility, has been an inaccurate representation of the outstanding work done by our employees and of the residents housed at the facility. Which for some residents and their families can be confusing, or frustrating to them because they or their loved one feel they are being labeled by being housed at this facility. We developed this proposal to align the name with our other correctional facilities which are named after the city of their location, and all referred to simply as “correctional facilities” with the addition of the word “state” to differentiate the acronym of Larned State Correctional Facility (LSCF) from the Lansing Correctional Facility (LCF).

We ask for your support in renaming the facility the Larned State Correctional Facility by recommending HB2214 favorable for passage by the Kansas Senate.