

Valentine, Teri (SEN)

From: Claire Masinton <cmasinton@mhlac.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 3:48 PM
To: Brownsberger, William (SEN); Hunt, Daniel - Rep. (HOU)
Cc: Helmuth, Eric (SEN); Walsh, Erin (HOU); Valentine, Teri (SEN)
Subject: DOC Classification - Other Data Points
Attachments: 04.07.25 Uyterhoeven-Holmes Letter to A. Nelligan re DOC Classification.pdf

Dear Senator Brownsberger and Rep. Hunt:

On the issue of DOC classification, I wanted to share with you (and all the Special Commission members) the attached letter from last April, sent by Rep. Uyterhoeven and Rep. Holmes to the DOC's Abbe Nelligan. As you'll recall, Ms. Nelligan was one of the DOC representatives present at the hearing on January 12.

At the risk of beating the proverbial dead horse even more, this exhaustively-researched letter highlights, among other things, (1) the DOC's ever-increasing budget (despite a plummeting prison population) – and the associated exorbitant cost of overclassification (pp. 1, 5); (2) the cost to prisoners of missing out on “meaningful and transferable work experience” and education and programming available only at minimum and pre-release facilities (pp. 1-2); and (3) the fact that, over time, DOC has placed an *increasing* number of prisoners in higher security, both as an absolute number and also immediately prior to release (Graphs 3, 4).

The letter also provides further data points concerning (1) DOC's history of placing prisoners in higher security despite objective measures indicating lower placement (see Tables 1, 2); and (2) DOC's extensive overuse of restrictions the National Institute of Corrections has deemed non-predictive – which is consistent with the findings presented by the UMass Chan Medical School researchers on January 12 (see p. 3).

While I and others have already made many of these points, they bear repeating, given the very real human and financial costs involved. And I believe the facts and data brought to bear are, at this point, not subject to dispute.

The hope is that the Special Commission will highlight this issue in its final report. If consolidation and efficiency are the goals, then one obvious answer is to fully (and appropriately) utilize our minimum facilities.

I remain at your disposal to answer any questions or further assist your work in any way!

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