

As I understand it, the subcommittee recently heard testimony on staffing levels for DOC institutions. I understand that that DOC management has asked for as many as 100 positions, while AFSCME has asked that the PRF [post relief factor] be greatly increased. As a 29 year veteran correctional officer I'm getting a little tired of our union and management continually requesting increases in staffing that are seldom justified. Our union's vested interest is obvious: more members mean more dues. Meanwhile management asks for more simply to make their staff deployment responsibilities less onerous. Time and time again it has been demonstrated that our institutions can cope with the number of staff they are currently allocated. If the legislature is truly interested in improving the working conditions of our line staff please look at the wage and benefit issues, particularly the "county comparators" and fully funded health insurance, before adding a number of staff whose essential function will be to have no defined job responsibilities other than perhaps drinking coffee. The nature of shift work is that it is often inconvenient and staff may occasionally have to work extra shifts or get undesirable days off. While not ideal, this is what public safety staff sign up for when they accept employment. Throwing money at staffing to eliminate this reality is a poor way to allocate the funds available to our department.

Sincerely,

Jim Reynolds