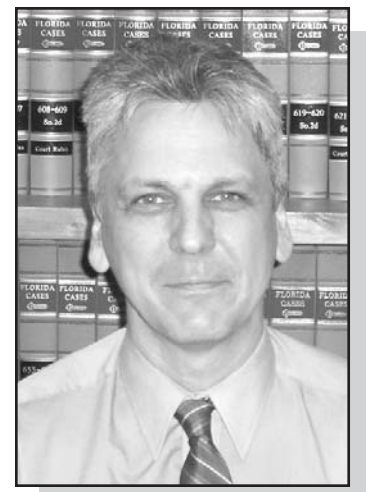


Privatization Issues In The News



*Ken
Kopczynski
Legislative
and Political
Affairs Assistant*

GEO's Graceville Prison's not so auspicious opening

Shortly after the opening in late 2007 of the GEO Group's newest private prison in Graceville, Florida, one of their guards was arrested for possession of a controlled substance. **Eddie Lee Nabors**, of Marianna, was arrested on November 1st, after authorities found crack cocaine in his vehicle while on prison grounds.

There were no indications that Mr. Nabors was sharing any of his coke with the inmates but with the low pay and benefits provided by private prisons vendors, GEO guards probably need a little extra cash to make ends meet.

Florida prison populations continue to grow

At the December 13th, 2007 meeting of the Senate Criminal and Civil Justice Appropriations Committee meeting, the Office of Economic and Demographic Research presented a bleak picture by the Criminal Justice Estimating Conference for the future of prison overcrowding in Florida.

Kathy McCharen, in a Criminal Justice analysis, did an overview of the projections of inmate admissions by the CJEC based on past models. These models take into account

all kinds of variables, including new laws and or changes in legal rulings, to produce a fairly accurate prediction of the need to new prison beds.

The problem is that the CJEC predictions for new commitments in February 2007 were almost 10 percent below the actual commitments. These errors led the CJEC to increase its admissions for FY 07-08 by 1,544 and by 3,050 for FY 08-09.

Because inmates are also released on a regular basis, the CJEC estimates that the total prison population on June 30th will increase by 1,306 for FY 07-08 and 2,738 for FY 08-09.

This represents almost three new 1,500 bed prisons. By June 2010, the State will run out of capacity based on existing beds and those currently under construction.

A big question is, will the state look at other options to prison overcrowding, including work release centers, community-based treatment and diversion, mental health institutions or turn to the private vendors to build more beds?

The Florida Police Benevolent Association will monitor this situation throughout the next legislative session and will work with legislators to make sure that the citizens of Florida and our Correctional and Correctional Probation Officers are safe. ■

Webpage

The Private Corrections Institute maintains an excellent webpage on the for-profit private prison industry. You can get recent news, lawsuits, reports, and links to other sites. Our "Hall of Shame" is a hit among activists.

The link is:

www.PrivateCI.org



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Get aboard the PCI-Watch

If you are serious about fighting the for-profit private prison industry, then you need to sign-up for the PCI's Watch — the electronic private prison news service. Just send your request to kenk@PrivateCI.org and ask to be put on the list. Please be aware — this is not for the faint-at-heart. Sometimes there is a lot of reading but it is well worth it.

