



DALLAS, PA. CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS LOCAL 2496



American Federation of
State, County and Municipal Employees AFL-CIO
P.O. Box 1381, Kingston, PA 18704

June 17, 1996



Dear Representative,

My name is William M. Lewis. I am a Sergeant at the State Correctional Institution at Dallas and also serve as President of AFSCME Local 2496 which represents over four and fifty employees at the Dallas facility.

The reason for my correspondence is solicit your support for the recent House of Representatives budget amendment to stop the use of Department of Corrections funds from being further utilized to outsource or privatize prisons, or prison related activities.

Rudy Arensberg (AFSCME Local 2500, President) of the State Correctional Institution at Pittsburgh and myself recently had the privilege of being selected as the AFSCME representatives on a tour of three identical correctional facilities (one public and two private sector prisons) in Louisiana.

Corrections Commissioner Martin Horn and other Department of Corrections staff, as well as Representatives Peter Zug, Harold James, and Jerry Birmelin and ourselves traveled to Louisiana to evaluate the operations at each facility. We were led to believe that all three prisons ran identically and only the color of the uniforms was different at the private and public sector institutions. I assure you that our observations showed otherwise.

The private sector institutions at Allen and Winn had most of the classic problems that plague 'for-profit' prisons throughout the country. Each had extraordinarily high employee turnover rates. Escapes, inmate violence and drug use was also significantly higher. In addition, staffing patterns were far inferior to the public sector facility located Avoyelles. It was immediately apparent that the private prisons just did not measure up to the public sector operations. Furthermore, no significant savings of budgeted funds was noted. They all cost about the same price to operate, yet the private firms seemed beset by problem after problem.

I have included a copy of a report on the Louisiana privatization effort that Mr. Arensberg and myself compiled. I believe this will help reinforce the view that prison privatization is a bad idea for Pennsylvania. I would hope you would help stop the privatization of the Department of Corrections by voting in favor of the anti-privatization budget amendment.

If you have any further questions or comment feel free to contact me anytime. My address and telephone numbers are listed below. Your cooperation and support is needed and appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sgt. William M. Lewis
President
AFSCME Local 2496
SCI Dallas
216 Wyoming Ave. Apt. 8
Kingston, Pa. 18704
(717) 283-3246 Home
(717) 675-1101 Work, 600-1400 hrs.



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State, County and Municipal Employees AFL-CIO

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June 17, 1996



Dear Representative Zug,

As promised, here is a copy of the report on the Louisiana trip authored by myself and Rudy Arnesberg. I also sent copies to all the Senators and Representatives in the Northeastern part of the Commonwealth. If you have any questions feel free to contact me anytime.

Sincerely,

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President
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The Tierney Group

The Honorable Peter J. Zug
Pennsylvania General Assembly
House of Representatives
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2020

April 26, 1996

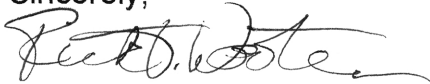
Dear Representative Zug,

On Thursday, April 25, 1996, our client The Wackenhut Corrections Corporation, testified before the House Judiciary Committee with respect to House Bill 246. We want to express our thanks to you as the prime sponsor of that bill for moving the issue forward for consideration. We have attached our presentation to the Committee for your review, and would like to discuss our views on the subject bill with you at your convenience.

As a major world-wide provider of correctional services, Wackenhut Corrections supports the concept of contracting those services in the Commonwealth. We respectfully believe that our effective, efficient and successful record as a provider qualifies us as a resource which can be utilized as issue is developed in Pennsylvania. Please feel free to contact us at any time if you require information and/or explanation to our position.

Once again, thank you for putting the issue out for consideration and deliberation. We look forward to working with you as the process evolves.

Sincerely,



Richard T. "Rick" Wooten
Vice President

PETER J. ZUG, MEMBER

HARRISBURG OFFICE:
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COMMITTEES

POLICY
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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

TO: All Members of the House of Representatives
FROM: Representative Peter J. Zug
DATE: December 13, 1994
SUBJECT: Proposed Legislation - Private Correctional Facilities
(formerly House Bill 2956)

When we return to session I plan to re-introduce legislation which would authorize the establishment and operation of private correctional facilities in the Commonwealth.

We know the private sector has demonstrated its efficiency and success in providing for the confinement and treatment of juvenile offenders. It is time to permit privatization of adult correctional facilities. There is not compelling reason for the Commonwealth to continue to pay for the outrageous costs associated with the incarceration of offenders who are non-violent, who pose little or no risk to the surrounding community.

My bill provides for oversight by the Department of Corrections and appropriate safeguards for the operation or private correctional facilities. The facilities must be licensed by the Department and the correctional facilities. The facilities must be licensed by the Department and the corrections officers must be certified according to the Department's training requirements.

If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation, please contact Jodi at 7-2686.

L. Cohen 177

Godshall 31

/jm

*Hershey 142
Robinson 9*

*Krebs - 124
Egolf - 109 #2
Norton - 106
Nickol - 63
Armstrong - 89*

*fargo - 125
Waugh - 39
McGeehan - 185
King - 129*

*(seat # may change)
Bunt 196
Geist 58
Starn - 36
Druce 17
Miller - 199
Sulli 87
Comti 5
Clerk 157
Fichter - 158
Barley - 2
176*



PETER J. ZUG, MEMBER

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House of Representatives

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

January 18, 1995

Ms. Rita A. Messimer
RD #1, Box 314
Mountain Drive
Fredericksburg, PA 17026

Dear Ms. Messimer:

Thank you for your recent letter expressing your opposition to privatizing correctional facilities and your views on other correctional issues. It is a pleasure to hear from you and to have the benefit of your views.

Although we may disagree on the issue of privatizing state prisons, we clearly agree on the need to improve the judicial system of our state. For example, I share your view that the state death penalty must be enforced and last year I supported legislation that would have forced the Governor to sign death warrants within 60 days of sentencing. Unfortunately, Governor Casey vetoed the bill.

Governor Tom Ridge has indicated his support for the measure which I am sure will be brought up during the special session on crime that the General Assembly has just opened. In addition, Governor Ridge has said that he will sign at least two death warrants before the end of the month.

With regard to luxuries enjoyed by prison inmates, the Department of Corrections has informed me that most of the extras, like cable television, are paid for by the inmates who use them. They use their own money or work a prison job to pay for the service. However, I agree with your point that prison should not be a vacation for criminals. I am sure that this issue will also be discussed in the special session.

Finally, overcrowding has been problem facing our corrections system for years and it only seems to grow worse. Three years ago, Governor Casey requested and the General Assembly approved funding for several new prison facilities to be built across the state. In addition, experimentation has begun to find alternatives to prison time for certain non-violent offenders like boot camps. The first boot-camp was opened a few years ago and has already "graduated" several classes of inmates.



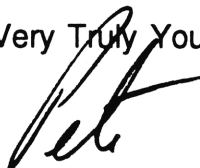
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Ms. Rita Messimer
January 18, 1995
Page 2

So, while you and I may not agree on every issue, I think we both agree on several solutions to the critical problems facing the corrections system. Clearly, we must continue to look for ways to improve the judicial system and hopefully the special session on crime will help us to take steps in that direction. Please be assured that I will keep your views in mind as our deliberations in the House of Representatives get underway.

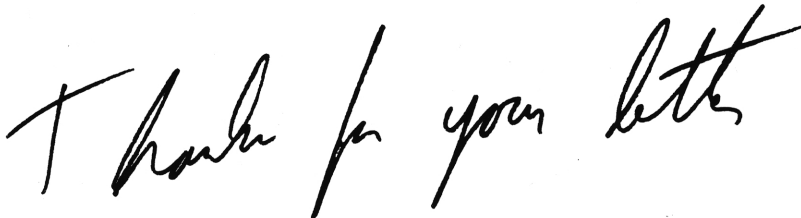
Once again, thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me. If I may be of any further assistance to you in this or other matters, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Very Truly Yours,



PETER J. ZUG, MEMBER
102nd Legislative District

PJZ/jm



RD#1, Box 314, Mountain Drive
Fredericksburg, PA 17026
December 26, 1994

Honorable Peter Zug
House of Representatives
112 West Main Avenue
Myerstown, Pennsylvania 17067

DEC 28 1994

Dear Mr. Zug:

I read with interest the article concerning your reintroduction of legislation to privatize correctional facilities in your November 1994 Report to the 102nd Legislative District. Ever since the campaign season, quite a few politicians including Governor-Elect Ridge have the idea that privatization of correctional facilities would make this Commonwealth a safer place and these facilities more efficient. As a state employee and a friend and fellow union member to the correctional officers at the prisons, I am appalled to learn that the legislators feel that our correctional officers are not doing a good job. Were any of the legislators at the Camp Hill prison riots a few years back when our correctional officers subject to inhumane treatment by the inmates??? Were any of you there to guard the rights of our correctional officers????? No!!!! The prisoner's rights were once again protected. How could we let them sleep outside after they burned down parts of the prison??? It would have been an inhumane act if these poor prisoners had to live outside. The taxpayers had to pay for the damages caused by the inmates. The prisoners should not have the rights and privileges they have while they are in prison! If they destroyed their living quarters - make them rebuild them or let them sleep outside. The majority of these inmates have a better life than the working society.

What about the few correctional officers still not back to work????? What was done for them?? I think before you begin to enact legislation to privatize the facilities, you should think about the state correction officers who will lose jobs through privatization and also, will privatization correct our problems? Privatization means less state jobs -- where do our current correctional officers get jobs????? Sure, you state privatization will create jobs - but for who? These correctional officers have the job knowledge, skill and training. Do you think the large corporations will keep our current state employees?? I haven't seen a large corporation keep the majority of the current employees. This means unemployment or welfare! The taxpayers do not want to pay added taxes for these two programs.

Privatization means big corporations -- more crime. Privatization does not make the system better -- what will make the system better is getting the judicial system to not give hand slaps for murder -- the death penalty should be enforced -- not let the prisoners have all the rights. What about the victims??? It seems to me the laws are to protect the offenders - not the innocent victims.

You state there is evidence showing separating the non-violent inmates from the violent inmates will help solve the problems of the non-violent crime offenders coming out of prison committing more violent crimes. If the justice society would enforce the death penalty without giving the inmates on death row chance upon chance to have stays of execution, we would not have to worry about housing these criminals. We would not have to worry about these offenders coming out of prison and committing violent crimes. If the courts would fulfill the punishment, more crime offenders would see the laws are not there to protect them - they are there to protect the victims.

The legislators should look at fulfilling the punishment of the crime offenders, take the prisoners rights away. Do they really need a gym, television, air conditioning????? Should they be able to live a life of luxury when they commit crimes. I think if you survey the public - the public will tell you the answer is no! This is what you need to look at in enacting legislation - not doing away with state jobs by privatization. This idea will never solve the problems!! It will create more added burdens to the citizens of the Commonwealth. You state in your article the taxpayers should not have to continue to pay for the outrageous costs associated with the incarceration of offenders - so do something!!! Enforce the punishment! How many more murders will it take for you people in Harrisburg to wake up????? How much more unemployment?????

I urge you and your fellow legislators to look again at the real problem --- lack of punishment for the crime. You are punishing the wrong people - you are punishing the workers, taxpayers and most of all the innocent victims.

Sincerely,



RITA A. MESSIMER



News

FOR RELEASE:

April 16, 1996

House of Representatives

Public Information Department
Commonwealth
of Pennsylvania

Rep. Peter J. Zug
(717) 866-9144
(717) 787-2686

Proposal To Privatize Prisons

-- Zug Legislation Would Save Taxpayers Millions --

HARRISBURG -- Legislation introduced by Rep. Peter Zug (R-Lebanon) to privatize the state's minimum-security prisons will be considered in a series of public hearings by the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime and Corrections.

"What I am suggesting is that we look for a viable alternative to the costly correctional system we have now," Zug said. "Private companies could operate the state's minimum-security prisons in a more cost-effective and efficient manner than a big government bureaucracy."

Zug's proposal -- House Bill 246-- authorizes the state to contract private firms to operate minimum-security correctional facilities for low-risk offenders. As part of the review process, the subcommittee will hold public hearings about the legislation at 1 p.m. Wednesday, April 24, and 9:30 a.m. Thursday, April 25, at the Capitol.

"It's very expensive to house inmates in the state's correctional facilities," Zug said. "Currently, our taxpayers spend nearly \$60 per day to house, feed and clothe each Pennsylvania prisoner."

Pennsylvania's taxpayers currently spend \$59.35 per day to house prisoners, compared to other states which spend anywhere from \$24 to \$43 under a privatized system. Neighboring states which already have private firms managing their prisons include New Jersey, New York, Virginia and West Virginia.

"Other states' per diem rates are significantly lower than ours," Zug said. "In the long run, contracting minimum-security prisons to the private sector would lower the cost per day of housing low-risk prisoners."