

Chairman Amstutz, Vice Chairman Boose, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee, my name is Gene Gallo and I am the Executive Director of the Eastern Ohio Correctional Center and a member of CorJus, Inc. a non-profit organization representing many of Ohio's publicly operated Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCFs).

We greatly appreciate the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction for their additional commitment of limited state resources to CBCFs which will enable us to open 190 additional unfunded beds throughout the state. This commitment will allow CBCFs to further assist DRC in their goal of reducing prison commitments by providing alternative sentencing options to all counties.

With prison commitments once again surpassing 50,000 and expected to exceed the all-time high later this year seeking alternatives to prison is paramount to avoid costly construction of new prisons. CBCFs provide the quality alternative Director Mohr spoke of in his testimony to this committee. Funding the additional 190 beds will result in diverting over 600 additional offenders from our prisons who will in turn receive effective treatment to reduce recidivism for years to come.

Enhancing public safety remains the goal of all CBCFs. CBCFs are in a unique position to accomplish this by combining punishment and treatment. While confined to CBCFs offenders complete many hours of highly intensive programming to deal with problems

such as drug and alcohol dependence, anger management, and begin walking the path to employability that will help ensure that the cycle of incarceration is broken.

In conclusion, I/CorJus wholeheartedly agree with Director Mohr's view that there are too many low level offenders in our prisons. It is absolutely correct that these offenders could be more effectively served at a much cheaper price than prison. The commitment to evidence based practices will ensure we convert low level offenders into employed, tax paying citizens.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.