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To; Joint Committee on Judiciary
Legislative Office Bldg. Room 2500
Hartford, CT.
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I Christopher hereby submit this testimony to the correctional advisory committee meeting and the public as a whole concerning the serious issues that need to be addressed within the Ct prison system. In my opinion, the system has been broken for decades and only gets worse year after year. This is in no way an exhaustive list, however I've put them in order starting with what I believe is the most concerning.

Meals;

The meals served to inmates have hardly any nutritional value as they consist of carb's, fake meat, soy as a filler, and over-cooked vegetables. The fruit we get is donated and mostly rotten. I'm sure other stuff is donated as well. We're fed boxed birthday cake with our breakfast almost every morning. How is that nutritional? The only real meat we get is a chicken leg, tuna, and eggs, but not often. All the other meat we get is processed. I have consulted with doctors who have stated this diet is not healthy by any means. Also, we're not given the allotted time to eat our meals and are lucky to get fifteen minutes most days.

Water:

The water quality behind these walls is not held to the same standards as the municipal water supply. The water is loaded with chlorine and extremely hard making it very difficult just to wash your hair. Frequent showers dry out your skin causing bumps and itchy rashes. The staff here are told to bring in their own water so what's that tell you? Also I was advised by a doctor who works for D.O.C. not to drink the water because he was told not to drink the water. He wanted to prescribe me water but was afraid of retaliation from his coworkers.

Medical:

The medical care behind these walls needs some serious attention. When an inmate has a medical need it should be addressed promptly. I was devastated after I found out my coworker at Osborne had suddenly passed away due to lack of medical care. When inmates are seen they're mostly given pain reliever pills and told to drink more water. Inmates should not have to be charged three dollars, and the doctor should not be asking them how much time they have on their sentence before deciding to treat them any further. One should not have to be cuffed to a chair all day at UCONN hospital just because they have a medical condition that needs further treatment. Nor should they have to get up at three am to go to said hospital and return 18 hours later.

Commissary goes up, medical and mental health take a hit as well. These tactics are saving money on the front end and making DOC money on the back end. How so? This system is designed in such a way that inmates spend X amount of dollars supplementing food, clothing, and cosmetics which are supposed to be provided. But since they're not, we as inmates are forced to foot the bill or suffer. Last I knew I was sentenced to serve time and be rehabilitated just like everyone else. We're all human and should be treated as such. Everyone makes mistakes, most people just haven't been caught....

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Rehabilitative Programs:

There's simply not enough programs or classes to help inmates succeed in becoming productive members of society upon entering the community. Too many inmates are falling through the cracks. When teachers or program directors retire they're not replaced. Case in point; carpentry and computer classes at Osborne have been discontinued since. There should be plenty of opportunities to earn different trades. Instead, thousands of inmates sit in their cells for twenty hours a day when they could be applying themselves with some sort of schooling. Inmates should be encouraged to return to society as a changed person, not looked down upon.

Commissary:

Inmates are constantly sold cheap defective products for full market value. There's no way any of these products are meeting quality standards from original manufacturers. We're talking, shoes, art supplies, electronics, cloths etc. All of these items come defective. Overall, they don't last long and are designed to wear out prematurely, malfunction or break. There's not much of a selection when it comes to any healthy products either. They're often too expensive to keep purchasing to supplement for lack of nutrition or food on your tray. Anytime there's something good that works for inmates; food or otherwise, it gets discontinued and replaced with something that commissary buys cheaper and sells at a more expensive price to inmates. And why does it cost family members money to transfer funds to their loved ones?

I once read a sign posted on the hallway walls in Osborne saying, "The Connecticut Department of Corrections strives to be the global leader in rehabilitation". As you can see a lot of work needs to be done to make this a reality cause right now we're far from it. I understand there is no perfect system and that things take time to correct. Take schooling for instance. The DOC has acres of land that could be used for teaching agriculture or how to install solar or wind turbines, auto shop, welding, diesel repair, etc. There are so many trades that could be offered but we're only offered a few. I also understand that people are placed here because they committed crimes. However, most of us are going home someday and could possibly end up becoming your neighbor. Wouldn't you want a productive neighbor? We need to be prepared to face the challenges out there if we seriously want to lower the recidivism rate and it starts inside these walls. When a person gets sentenced, the expectation is that they are taken out of society to be rehabilitated provided their going home someday. After all, our tax dollars "Inmates Included" are paying full admission prices but only a miniscule amount is being spent on inmates! The food gets worse, programs get underfunded or cut entirely.

These signatures are from inmates that have read and agree to this testimony.

Inmate Printed Name; / Inmate Signature: / Inmate Number:

[illegible]