

State Notes

TOPICS OF LEGISLATIVE INTEREST

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Prison and Camp Closures **By Lindsay Hollander, Fiscal Analyst**

In the wake of budget reductions across State government, the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) has been working to reduce the prison and camp population over the past two years in order to close correctional facilities. After reaching a high of 51,544 prisoners in April 2007, the MDOC population is now at an eight-year low of 47,264 prisoners. By the end of 2009, the MDOC plans to have a population of 45,433 in order to close three prisons and five camps.

Table 1 lists the proposed closures, as well as a history of correctional facility closures. Figure A provides an illustration of this closure history. Facility closures over the past five years have resulted in \$155.8 million of annual savings. This is primarily the result of the 1,841.8-position reduction in full-time equated (FTE) positions. In order to realize additional savings in the Department, the fiscal year (FY) 2009-10 Governor's recommended MDOC appropriations included savings of \$118.0 million for unspecified facility closures. The House-passed version of House Bill 4437, the FY 2009-10 MDOC budget bill, included this \$118.0 million savings for facility closures. Following the announcement of the eight facility closures on June 5, 2009, the Senate passed a version of House Bill 4437 that eliminated funding for these facilities. Approximately 1,072.0 FTE positions would be eliminated. However, according to the MDOC, the number of employees laid off could be as low as 500 to 700, depending on the number of employees who choose to fill other vacancies or retire.

The MDOC has already transferred all prisoners from Camp Cusino. Camps Kitwen and Ottawa, and Standish Correctional Facility, which are proposed for closure, likely would close in August 2009. Camps Lehman and White Lake would close by October 1, 2009. Hiawatha and Muskegon correctional facilities likely would close sometime during October 2009. In addition to the closures, Alger Maximum Correctional Facility will be converting from a Level V to a Level IV with 176 administrative segregation beds. The reduction in security level will accommodate those prisoners who are currently housed in a Level V facility, but are actually classified as Level IV.

The 11,673-bed reduction in prison and camp beds has been possible due to a decrease in the prison population and the addition of beds to existing facilities. For example, open bay units in minimum security prisons now have seven or eight prisoners per open bay. Five years ago, these open bays housed six prisoners. Other facilities have double-bunked previously single-bunk cells.

In order to reduce the prison and camp population, the Parole Board increased the parole approval rate to 63.5% for January through May 2009, which is a 5.4 percentage point increase from calendar year 2008 and an 11 percentage point increase from 2007. Additional parolees result in additional costs of electronic monitoring, parole supervision, and community reentry programming. The Governor recommended \$36.8 million for these purposes, at an average annual cost of \$9,200 per parolee. With average annual savings of \$29,500 per prisoner for the proposed prison and camp closures, the MDOC would realize net savings of \$20,300 per prisoner in the first full year of the closures.



Table 1

Michigan Department of Corrections Facility Closures				
Fiscal Year	Facility	Bed Reduction	FTE Reduction	Total Annual Savings
2004-05	Western Wayne Correctional Facility	778	299.2	
	Camp Sauble	156	36.0	
	Camp Tuscola ¹	260	61.0	
	Total	1,194	396.2	\$24,896,700
2005-06	Michigan Youth Correctional Facility	480	1.0	\$17,840,700
2006-07	Camp Brighton ²	404	103.2	\$0
2007-08	Southern Michigan Correctional Facility & Egeler Reception and Guidance Center Annex	1,964	534.8	
	Camp Manistique	264	47.0	
	Riverside Correctional Facility ³	(127)	26.1	
	Total	2,101	607.9	\$54,246,700
2008-09	Camp Branch	710	126.9	
	Deerfield Correctional Facility	1,200	236.9	
	Scott Correctional Facility ⁴	880	369.7	
	Total	2,790	733.5	\$58,828,900
Subtotal FY 2004-05 to FY 2008-09		6,969	1,841.8	\$155,813,000
Proposed	Camp Cusino	320	60.0	
	Camp Kitwen	288	56.0	
	Camp Lehman	582	110.0	
	Camp Ottawa	288	51.0	
	Camp White Lake	160	42.0	
	Hiawatha Correctional Facility	1,120	208.0	
	Muskegon Correctional Facility	1,326	264.0	
	Standish Maximum Correctional Facility	620	281.0	
	Total	4,704	1,072.0	\$117,992,800
Grand Total		11,673	2,913.8	\$273,805,800

¹ Reopened as Tuscola Reentry Center.

² Camp Brighton was replaced by the reopening of Gilman technical rule violator (TRV) center as Camp White Lake, and the conversion of the Huron Valley TRV center to Camp Valley. By closing Camp Brighton, the MDOC was able to avoid the cost of maintenance projects.

³ Riverside's closure coincided with the reopening of the Michigan Reformatory (MR). The bed and FTE numbers shown are net of the reopening of the MR.

⁴ Most of the female prisoners from Scott were moved to the Huron Valley Complex (HVC). All male prisoners were moved out of the HVC. The MDOC is in the process of opening units in the Department of Human Services' W.J. Maxey Training School to accommodate 328 male prisoners from the HVC. The annualized savings for the FY 2008-09 closures are net of the \$16.7 million cost of the prisoners at Maxey.

