



THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

The Honorable Maura T. Healey
Governor of Massachusetts
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon Street, Room 360
Boston, MA 02133

October 8, 2024

Dear Governor Healey:

We are writing to request immediate action be taken to ensure the safety and security for everyone at Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center and all Department of Correction (DOC) facilities. This request follows the violent incident at Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center on September 18, 2024. The incident involved multiple inmates, and weapons, and resulted in the hospitalization of five Corrections Officers. After speaking with members of the Massachusetts Correction Officers Federated Union (MCOFU) Executive Board, staff and members of the public, we believe ongoing issues in the Commonwealth's correction facilities necessitates immediate intervention to protect both staff and inmates alike. While we appreciate the steps outlined in Interim Commissioner Jenkins' September 25th letter, we believe that additional changes are needed to prevent a similar incident in the future. It has come to our attention that routine use of DOC Tactical Response Units to execute comprehensive searches has become exceedingly rare in recent years. As legislators, we believe in the establishment of a commonsense approach to address these recent upticks in violence, assaults, and illegal contraband at DOC facilities. To that end, we request the immediate implementation of reasonable policy adjustments below:

- Regular, routine, and complete tactical searches conducted at all DOC correctional facilities throughout the Commonwealth, especially at medium and maximum-security institutions that have experienced an uptick in violence, weapons or illegal drugs.
- Swift prosecution of inmate assaults on Correction Officers, with specific focus on the Bodily Fluids Act, which was passed by the Legislature in 2005 to serve as a legal deterrent. Prosecutions under this Act have not been pursued in a manner consistent enough to establish an effective deterrent.
- Issuance of an executive order creating a Blue-Ribbon Taskforce to review safety/security protocols, provide transparency and make additional recommendations for the DOC to implement. We feel strongly that this will provide greater safety and security for Officers, staff, and inmates.
- Establish monthly meetings between the EOPSS Secretary and designated representatives of the MCOFU Executive Board to discuss ongoing challenges, resolve issues and keep the lines of communication open.

These commonsense approaches will enhance the safety and security of our officers, staff and the inmate population. Your attention, and more importantly, implementation regarding these reasonable requests will be significant steps forward in providing a safe and secure environment for all in our correctional facilities.

Thank you,

Jonathan Zlotnik
State Representative
2nd Worcester District

Michael Moore
State Senator
Second Worcester District

Kimberly Ferguson
State Representative
1st Worcester District

Mathew Muratore
State Representative
1st Plymouth District

David Vieira
State Representative
3rd Barnstable District

Patricia Haddad
State Representative
5th Bristol District

Adam Scanlon
State Representative
14th Bristol District

Peter Durant
State Senator
Worcester and Hampshire District

F. Jay Barrows
State Representative
1st Bristol District

Michael Soter
State Representative
8th Worcester District

Carol Doherty
State Representative
3rd Bristol District

Joseph McKenna
State Representative
18th Worcester District

Susannah Whipps
State Representative
2nd Franklin District

Steven Xiarhos
State Representative
5th Barnstable District

David Muradian
State Representative
9th Worcester District

Hannah Kane
State Representative
11th Worcester District

Donald Berthiaume
State Representative
5th Worcester District

Paul Frost
State Representative
7th Worcester District

John Marsi
State Representative
6th Worcester District

Alyson Sullivan-Almeida
State Representative
7th Plymouth District

Marc Lombardo
State Representative
22nd Middlesex District

Steven Howitt
State Representative
4th Bristol District

John Cronin
State Senator
Worcester and Middlesex District

Ryan Fattman
State Senator
Worcester and Hampden District

James Arena-DeRosa
State Representative
8th Middlesex District

Christopher Hendricks
State Representative
11th Bristol District

Colleen Garry
State Representative
36th Middlesex District

Nick Collins
State Senator
First Suffolk District

Mark Cusack
State Representative
5th Norfolk District

Jessica Giannino
State Representative
16th Suffolk District

Paul McMurtry
State Representative
11th Norfolk District

David DeCoste
State Representative
5th Plymouth District

Patrick Kearney
State Representative
4th Plymouth District

James Arciero
State Representative
2nd Middlesex District

Marc Pacheco
State Senator
Third Bristol and Plymouth District

Tackey Chan
State Representative
2nd Norfolk District

James Hawkins
State Representative
2nd Bristol District

Angelo Puppolo
State Representative
12th Hampden District

Michael Kushmerek
State Representative
3rd Worcester District

Rodney Elliott
State Representative
16th Middlesex District

Jeffrey Turco
State Representative
19th Suffolk District

Paul Feeney
State Senator
Bristol and Norfolk District

Jacob Oliveira
State Senator
Hampden, Hampshire and Worcester District

Walter Timilty
State Senator
Norfolk, Plymouth and Bristol District

David Robertson
State Representative
19th Middlesex District

Mark Montigny
State Senator
Second Bristol and Plymouth District

Christopher Flanagan
State Representative
1st Barnstable District

Brian Murray
State Representative
10th Worcester District

Marcus Vaughn
State Representative
9th Norfolk District

Bruce Ayers
State Representative
1st Norfolk District

Meghan Kilcoyne
State Representative
12th Worcester District

Michael Rush
State Senator
Norfolk and Suffolk District

John Keenan
State Senator
Norfolk and Plymouth District

Margaret Scarsdale
State Representative
1st Middlesex District

Shirley Arriaga
State Representative
8th Hampden District

Alan Silvia
State Representative
7th Bristol District

Antonio F.D. Cabral
State Representative
13th Bristol District

Joseph McGonagle
State Representative
28th Middlesex District

Bradley Jones
State Representative
20th Middlesex District

Patrick O'Connor
State Senator
First Plymouth and Norfolk District

John Velis
State Senator
Hampden and Hampshire District

Michael Brady
State Senator
Second Plymouth and Norfolk District

Donald Wong
State Representative
9th Essex District

Brian Ashe
State Representative
2nd Hampden District

William Straus
State Representative
10th Bristol District

Daniel Cahill
State Representative
10th Essex District