CorJus Inc. PO Box 2400, Wintersville, OH 43953

CORJUS Inc.
Community Based Correctional Facilities

Eastern Ohio Correctional Center
Wintersville OH
Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Guernsey, Harrison, Jefferson, Monroe, Noble

Franklin County CBCF
Columbus OH
Franklin

Lucas County Correctional Treatment Facility
Toledo OH
Lucas

MonDay Community Correctional Institution, Dayton OH
Darke, Green, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, Fayette

Northwest Community Corrections Center
Defiance, Fullton, Henry, Williams, Wood

S.T.A.R. Community Justice Center
Portsmouth OH
Adams, Brown, Clinton, Highland, Lawrence, Pickaway, Pike, Ross, Scioto

Stark Regional Community Correction Center, Louisville OH
Holmes, Stark, Tuscarawas, Wayne

West Central Community Correctional Facility
Champaign, Clark, Delaware, Logan, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Union

W.O.R.T.H. Center, Lima OH
Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Mercer, Putnam, Paulding, Shelby, Van Wert

Senate Finance: Corrections Subcommittee

HB 64-FY 16-17 Operating Budget

Proponent Testimony of: Bud Hite

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May 14, 2015

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Good morning Chair Uecker, Vice Chair Brown and members of the Senate Finance Corrections Subcommittee. My name is Bud Hite and I am the Executive Director of the Lucas County Correctional Treatment Facility and a member of CorJus, Inc. CorJus, Inc. is a professional trade association that represents most of Ohio's publicly operated Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCFs) across Ohio.

The first CBCF in Ohio dates back to 1978 and was established to be locally controlled. Today there are 18 CBCFs serving all 88 counties and providing treatment to nearly 7,000 offenders each year. With today's prison population slightly in excess of 50,000, CBCFs and all Community Corrections are an excellent resource for reducing the prison population.

CBCF's provide the most secure level of programmatic intervention in the community for eligible felony offenders, including education, job training, cognitive behavioral therapy, family outreach and substance abuse treatment during the term of their sentence. The communities we serve need to know they are safe and will not be further victimized by the offenders who are sentenced to serve in a CBCF. CBCFs are in a unique position to keep our communities safe as we combine punishment and treatment.

While an offender is incarcerated in a CBCF, the offender is mandated to complete a rigorous treatment regimen. Throughout the offender's incarceration he/she is taught the skills to deal with drug and alcohol addiction and to change criminal behavior, and has the ability to obtain a GED and assistance in finding viable employment. Through employment, CBCF clients can pay towards their court costs and fines, restitution to victims, and, most importantly, pay child support and other family expenses.

Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Director Mohr recently addressed this subcommittee and said that the "Vision of the Department" is "to reduce crime in Ohio and reduce recidivism among those we touch." The nine publicly operated Community Based Correctional Facilities that I represent today want you to know that we intend to help the Director in every way possible to make his vision for Ohio a reality.

We appreciate the confidence that Governor Kasich and Director Mohr have shown by committing additional resources in this biennium budget for not only CBCFs but community corrections as a whole. They are truly taking a holistic approach to combat our shared war on drugs. This administration recognizes that a strong community corrections system is essential to reduce crime, recidivism and Ohio's prison population. In this difficult budget period, the Governor and Director Mohr are requesting increases in several community corrections lines. We strongly support this request and commend them for their vision.

Both Mental Health & Addiction Services Director Plouck and DRC Director Mohr testified in front of this committee sharing the importance of collaborating services – what a display of true leadership. They have modeled for the entire state exactly what it takes to be successful. They have come together for the common good of offenders and set aside boundaries to share budget dollars and ideas, as well as programming staff, to ensure the people who are served in both systems have a meaningful opportunity to change their lives. They deserve to be applauded for their forward thinking and efforts thus far.

We have and will continue to work tirelessly with the Department to lower the number of offenders being sentenced to prison by accepting more residents and keeping lower risk offenders a shorter time. Our agency physical plants have already been examined for their potential to add an additional 500 beds. We

strongly support Director Mohr's position to add the additional CBCF beds as it will allow for an additional 1,750 offenders to be diverted from prison each year and will allow those offenders to benefit from the proven course of treatment provided in a CBCF. Director Mohr has testified many times stating that he believes we should invest in people, not bricks and mortar; we couldn't agree more. He has also stated that if he has to build more prisons, he will resign and I don't think any of us in this room or across the state want to see that happen as he is one of the most innovative, compassionate and caring leaders we've ever had the pleasure of working with.

In conclusion, we again want to commend the Department and the Administration for their vision and leadership. We are happy to continue to work as a partner. CBCFs are part of a holistic approach that encompasses providing punishment based options to Judges, prosecutors and the DRC to manage the prison population in a way that is sensible and does not compromise public safety.

Mr. Chair, members of the Senate Finance Corrections Subcommittee, thank you for your time. I am joined today by several other CBCF Directors and I would ask that they stand to be recognized. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee might have at this time.