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The Honorable Joe Uecker
Chairman, Senate Finance – Corrections Subcommittee
1 Capitol Square, Room 134
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Uecker,

I write today to lend my support to the proposal to create a sustainable source of funding for the Horizon Prison Initiative. Horizon is a proven, faith-based program that provides an opportunity for inmates to focus on reforming their values and their lives. I have personally attended a presentation by inmates in the Horizon program, and I can say that it sends a powerful message about redemption and transformation.

Because it has been effective at lowering the recidivism rate of its participants, Horizon is also a sound use of state money. The proposed line item is a relatively small investment in light of the State's budget; yet it provides returns in the forms of reduced crime and reduced future incarceration. I am convinced that Horizon is a program that pays for itself by preparing inmates to become productive members of society—not just repeat offenders.

I believe in the mission of the Horizon Prison Initiative, and that is why my office has provided it limited, targeted grants. These grants, which have come from settlement awards, have allowed Horizon to purchase much needed computer equipment and have allowed them to cover part of their operating expenses. However, settlement awards are uncertain and unpredictable; they cannot be the basis of long term funding for a program like Horizon. Approving line-item funding for the program would not only ensure its long term feasibility, it would give it the opportunity to expand to serve incarcerated women.

Horizon is an investment in a safer and more productive Ohio, and I encourage you to approve the proposed line-item. I also encourage you to attend one of Horizon's eye-opening presentations to see for yourself the good work being done by the program and its participants.

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine
Ohio Attorney General