



House Bill 81 Proponent Testimony

Good morning Chairman Hackett, Vice Chair Hottinger, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions Committee. My name is Cary Williams, I am the Executive Director of NorthWest Community Corrections Center located in Bowling Green, Ohio. I am also a Trustee of CorJus, Inc., a collaborative and innovative trade association for Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCF). I appreciate this opportunity to submit written proponent testimony in support of House Bill 81.

The first CBCF in Ohio dates back to 1978 and was established to be locally controlled. Today there are 17 CBCFs serving all 88 counties and providing treatment to almost 8,000 offenders each year. CBCFs are funded through the General Revenue Fund (GRF – Line 501 501) as part of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction budget and are a unique partnership between state and local government. With around 49,000 individuals incarcerated in Ohio's prisons, CBCFs and all community corrections are an excellent and cost-effective resource for reducing the prison population.

House Bill 81 provides needed coverage for our front-line staff. Recently, one of our member facilities had a situation where a resident was causing self-harm. The CBCF employee entered the cell to help get the resident under control and had blood splatter on himself.

The employee was sent to a health center for testing and was informed that Workers Comp would not cover this incident. When inquired about this Workers Comp stated that we, CBCF staff, were not classified as "First Responders" and therefore the testing that was run on our employee would not be covered by Workers Comp. House Bill 81 will help fix this loophole and will give our employees protections for doing their difficult and necessary jobs faced in a correctional facility.

I would like to thank Rep. Perales for bringing this issue to light and for his leadership on the bill and would urge passage of this bill.