

CBS 11 News Exclusive: Legislature has asked for an audit of the Department of Corrections

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After months of allegations lawmakers are asking for answers.

CBS 11 News has learned that the Legislature has asked for an audit of the Department of Corrections.

The reason: accusations of unsafe conditions within the Alaskan prison system.

Over the last few months, there have been serious allegations against the state Department of Corrections. The allegations have been of unhealthy and unsafe conditions behind prison walls.

The complaints came first from inmates, then from the Corrections Officers' Union. Just a few weeks ago, the officers gave a *no confidence* vote to the department and the DOC commissioner.

Now the Legislature has gotten involved.

Senator Bill Wielechowski and Senator Hollis French are spearheading an audit of the prison system to get to the bottom of the issue and find out if the prison situation has caused a health and safety risk for the entire state.

"I've heard reports of inmates that have this Staph infection. They are giving it to corrections officers who are working there. Officers are then giving it to their families. So this exposes the entire Alaskan public to this contagious illness that is out there. We want to find out more," said Senator Wielechowski of the Legislative Budget and Audit Commission.

The senators have called for the audit already. The Legislative Budget and Audit Committee will vote on the audit next Wednesday; but it is expected to pass. When and if that happens, an independent investigation team will be inspecting prisons throughout the state.

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