



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Dean Williams Falsely Attacks Correctional Officers, then Appointed as New DOC Commissioner**

The appointment of Dean Williams as Commissioner of the Department of Corrections (DOC) is extremely concerning to Correctional Officers and their families. In his role as investigator, Dean Williams released an Administrative Review that contained many incorrect and misleading statements about Officers' actions, and presented several false narratives which were detrimental to both the DOC and its employees. Changing the security practices that Dean Williams criticized will put the entire inmate population at risk.

Many aspects of Dean Williams' report and statements were false and caused widespread negative public reaction towards Officers. Dean Williams' report not only created the Commissioner opening for himself, but it put over 1800 correctional employees and their families at risk.

For years, Correctional Officers have asked the Department of Corrections to be transparent and address the chronic understaffing in our institutions. Dean Williams' Administrative Review was anything but transparent.

At first, Correctional Officers felt these inaccuracies could be resolved through conversations with Dean Williams and the Governor. Correctional Officers are barred from publically defending themselves, so we hoped and asked for a retraction which would acknowledge that the Administrative Review contained inaccuracies and that the State would publically defend the harmed Officers. If there was no retraction by the Governor or Dean Williams, ACOA planned to hold a press conference on February 3, 2016 to announce that Dean Williams' Administrative Review was fraught with inaccuracies and was agenda driven. This press conference was preempted by yesterday's announcement, which completely disregarded Officers' concerns and safety.

Most of the Correctional Officers in the videos were neither interviewed nor given a chance to defend themselves prior to the report and the videos being released. Multiple investigations cleared

these Officers of any wrong-doing prior to Dean Williams' investigation. At the very least, these Officers should have been given the opportunity to defend themselves prior to being publically humiliated and vilified. Attached are some of the comments in the press generated by Dean Williams' false narrative.

*"In each of the situations mentioned in Dean Williams' Administrative Review, Officers performed their duties in accordance with their training, DOC policy, and national corrections standards, and were in no way responsible for any inmate deaths. Their actions were necessary to maintain the security and control of Alaska's correctional institutions. Correctional Officers have been ordered, regardless of Dean Williams' accusations of wrong-doing to the press, that they are to continue the same procedures seen in the video."*

- Randy McLellan, ACOA President

For years Correctional Officers have asked that safety and security in the institutions be made a top priority. The release of videos, without proper explanation, does nothing more than undermine and demoralize Correctional Officers statewide, using them as scapegoats to unnecessarily divert attention from the systemic problems throughout the DOC, including understaffing. If Dean Williams is going to propagate videos without proper explanation and thereby expose Correctional Officers to unnecessary ridicule and harm, then he needs to make good on its word and address the safety issues Correctional Officers have been asking for years to be addressed.

**We believe Governor Walker has not been given complete or correct information.** Dean Williams' report was not only false and misleading, it was an insult to every Correctional Officer and completely disregards the service they perform in a dangerous environment. Correctional employees statewide will be releasing information and putting together a more comprehensive report that will give the real facts in response to the one released by Dean Williams.

*"Dean Williams wrote a false report, he hid information that proved Officers innocence, and someone altered video evidence. If a Correctional Officer had done any one of these actions, they would have been terminated."*

- Randy McLellan, ACOA President

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