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SEN. BOYSKO, DEL. SHIN APPLAUD TERMINATION OF PRIVATE MANAGEMENT AT LAWRENCEVILLE CORRECTIONAL CENTER

HERNDON, Va. – Today, Senator Jennifer Boysko (D-Fairfax) and Delegate Irene Shin (D-Herndon) released the following statement upon receiving confirmation that GEO Group's contract to oversee Lawrenceville Correctional Center will be ending effective August 1, 2024.

"This is a momentous and hopeful day for criminal justice reform in Virginia. Transitioning operation at Lawrenceville Correctional Center from a for-profit company to VADOC is a positive change that I hope will improve conditions and rehabilitation programs for those incarcerated there," said **Senator Jennifer Boysko**. "Additionally, I am thrilled to see the direct impacts of our efforts to enact meaningful criminal justice reform with policies like earned sentence credits. Fewer individuals unnecessarily behind bars allows our dollars to shift towards crime prevention, rehabilitation, reentry services and violence interruption programs rather than maintaining facilities like Augusta Correctional Center and Sussex II State Prison that have been operating at well below capacity. The progress made in recent years towards an approach focused on restoration over retribution fills me with hope and pride. This transition away from private prisons signifies another step towards a more ethical, humane and effective criminal justice system in Virginia and the nation."

"I am both happy and relieved to hear that VADOC will be assuming control of Lawrenceville Correctional Center," said **Delegate Irene Shin**. "Private prisons that prioritize profits over people have no place in our justice system. Under GEO Group's consistent mismanagement, Lawrenceville Correctional Center has seen numerous tragic overdose deaths and arbitrary lockdowns, as well as a denial of basic needs such as clean drinking water, medical treatment, and religious services. These conditions were untenable and I am heartened to learn that the GEO Group's contract is coming to an end. I especially want to recognize VADOC Director Chadwick Dotson's leadership and commitment to the safety and rehabilitation of the incarcerated population in the DOC system."

BACKGROUND

In September of 2022 Delegate Shin along with Senator Boysko toured the Lawrenceville Correctional Center as it was in the midst of an extended lockdown. Delegate Shin and Senator Boysko learned that the lockdown was in response to a string of overdose related incidents at the facility. This extensive lockdown which began in August of 2022 included loss of religious services, outdoor recreational time as well as video and in-person visitation and was in place through November of last year.

In 2020, Senator Boysko introduced [SB 5034](#) to establish an opportunity for incarcerated individuals to earn sentence credits. The bill was ultimately signed into law by Governor Ralph Northam in November 2020.

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