



SHERIFF

East Baton Rouge Parish

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SID J. GAUTREAUX, III

SHERIFF & TAX COLLECTOR

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April 23, 2024

VIA USPS & FAX

Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome

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and

The East Baton Rouge Parish Metropolitan Council:

Councilman Brandon Noel, District 1

Councilwoman Chauna Banks, District 2

Councilman Rowdy Gaudet, District 3

Councilman Aaron Moak, District 4

Councilman Darryl Hurst, District 5

Councilman Cleve Dunn Jr, District 6

Councilman LaMont Cole, District 7

Councilwoman Denise Amoroso, District 8

Councilman Dwight Hudson, District 9

Councilwoman Carolyn Coleman, District 10

Councilwoman Laurie Adams, District 11

Councilwoman Jennifer Racca, District 12

c/o Council Administrator

Ashley Beck

222 Saint Louis St

Room 364

Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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RE: Act 13 of the 2024 Second Extraordinary Session of the Louisiana Legislature & Juveniles in the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison

Mayor-President Broome and East Baton Rouge Parish Metropolitan Councilmembers,

I write to respond to Mayor-President Broome's April 16, 2024 correspondence and to follow up on the Mayor's April 18, 2024 tour of the Parish Prison and subsequent discussions related to Act 13 of the 2024 Second Extraordinary Session of the Louisiana Legislature, which went into effect Friday.

At this time, we have received seven criminal commitment orders to transport juvenile offenders to the Parish Prison and in response thereto have filed Emergency Motions to Vacate Criminal Commitment and to Set Expedited Hearing and Emergency Motions to Stay Criminal Commitment on the basis that the Parish Prison facility does not meet the minimum national standards for a good and sufficient jail for the housing of 17-year-old youthful offenders.

I had understood that we were on the same page that the Parish Prison facility was not in a condition to meet the standards required by PREA. However, your office has requested the seven youthful offenders be transported from the Juvenile Detention Center to the Parish Prison.

As Sheriff I have always been open to communication with the City Parish and all our criminal justice partners, and as you pointed out in your correspondence, both our agencies are committed to the citizens of the Parish of East Baton Rouge. That commitment extends to all the citizens in the Parish, including those 17-year-old offenders that are being prosecuted as adults that were in the East Baton Rouge Detention Center that on April 19, 2024, the City Parish had communicated will be moved to the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison.

It had been communicated that the 17-year-old offenders would be held in central booking until proper housing can be provided for them. However, the central booking area in the parish prison is not jail housing, and the inmates cannot be housed there. There is not even a functioning shower in the area.

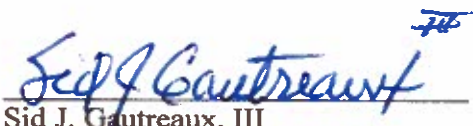
Despite the extensive punch list of maintenance jobs currently scheduled (see attached maintenance schedule) by the City Parish, the Parish Prison will still not meet the PREA standards required to keep youthful offenders. I, as Sheriff, cannot assume the security of these 17-year-old offenders without the City Parish providing a facility that meets the requirements for youthful offenders under the law. The proposed maintenance will not solve the problems of the facility structure to enable it to comply with PREA. This area of the prison has extensive mold, rust, and has had portions of that wing covered in raw sewage. Prior to allowing any juvenile into the Parish Prison, and after the maintenance is performed, I request that the City Parish have the proposed areas of the facility in which these 17-year-old juveniles would be placed inspected and approved for its proposed use by the State Inspector for Louisiana Department of Health and the Fire Marshall.

Additionally, although the City Parish is now scheduling long needed maintenance for a wing of the prison in an attempt to provide the Sheriff's Office with an adequate and safe facility to put the male 17-year-old-juvenile offenders, this still does not address or provide any area of the facility in which female 17-year-old offenders being tried as adults could be placed in the facility. Nor does it provide any location in which the male and female youthful offenders can receive their mandated education separated from adults and separated male and female juvenile inmates. Further, there is no area of the Parish Prison facility in which 17-year-olds will get large muscle exercise as required by law that is separated from adult inmates. The recreation yard is next to the adult construction crew and does not keep the juveniles separated. Despite pleas for open communications, the City Parish has yet to communicate with the Sheriff's Office about its plan to meet the mandated educational requirements for these inmates, and the Parish Prison has no area within the facility which meets the required separation of inmates and safety and security for this required education to take place.

The City Parish also has not communicated with the Sheriff's Office its plan for the health care and mental health treatment and services that will be required for these 17-year-old juvenile offenders while in Parish Prison, nor does the Parish Prison have an area in the facility in which these services can be provided that meet the separation requirements.

I will not house these 17-year-old youth offenders in dangerous and inadequate living conditions. The citizens of Baton Rouge expect that these juvenile offenders will be in a safe and secure facility for both juveniles and staff. As an interim measure to address these issues, and due to the immediate need to provide a placement for these youthful offenders on April 19, 2024, Jackson Parish Detention Center agreed to temporarily provide housing for these youthful offenders. I await your direction as to a location to transfer these youthful offenders so that they are provided with an adequate facility that complies with the law in accordance with the responsibilities of the City Parish.

Sincerely,


Sid J. Gautreaux, III
Sheriff of East Baton Rouge Parish

Attachment