

Senate Bill 2136 – Department of Human Services
Correctional Facility Review Committee
Representative Pollert – Chairman
February 19, 2008

Mr. Chairman and members of the Correctional Facility Review Committee my name is Alex C. Schweitzer the Superintendent of the North Dakota State Hospital representing the Department of Human Services. I am here today to provide an update on the implementation of the provisions of Senate Bill 2136.

Senate Bill 2136 mandates that the Executive Director of the Department of Human Services and the Director of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation enter into an interagency agreement for the provision of safety and security services for the sex offender unit located at the North Dakota State Hospital. This agreement was executed in 2007 and personnel from the James River Correctional Center are providing training, consultation and assistance to the personnel at the North Dakota State Hospital sex offender unit. The Department of Human Services continues to have the responsibility for the custody and care of individuals placed for evaluation or civil commitment and treatment at the sex offender unit at the North Dakota State Hospital.

Don Redmann, Warden at the James River Correctional Center, has reviewed the safety and security procedures at the sex offender unit on two occasions, December 4, 2007 and January 15, 2008. Mr. Redmann has developed a specific list of recommendations for hospital administration and has worked with staff of the sex offender unit in the implementation of these safety and security recommendations. To date the following action steps have been implemented as a result of these recommendations;

- The James River Correctional Center and the North Dakota State Hospital have implemented a staff training program that requires all staff to complete

Page Two: Report to the Correctional Facility Review Committee

safety and security training, to include 16 hours of orientation for new staff and 50 hours of annual training for all staff.

- Implementation of a key control program to control access of keys by staff and former staff of the unit.
- Completion of the project to install security windows throughout the Secure Services Unit (sex offender unit) by May 2008.
- Action steps to improve the supervision of clients on the sex offender unit; including the hiring of additional security staff, more direct visual contact between staff and patients, the scheduling of health and welfare searches to ensure that all areas are searched a least once per month and the implementation of a tool policy in the vocational/education work areas.

The completion of the safety and security upgrades that the hospital has been working on for the last two years will also enhance security and safety in this program. These upgrades include; the aforementioned security windows, fire safety measures, door control measures and properly classifying and placing sex offenders in appropriate treatment and security units. The construction of the high security addition to the GM Building will further enhance the hospital's ability to deal effectively with high risk sex offenders.

Mr. Redmann and the staff of the JRCC will continue their consultation and the hospital is very appreciative of the expertise that the correctional facility staff brings to this clinical program. The partnership has been beneficial in meeting the goal of safety/security for staff and clients and community safety.

Thank you. I would be glad to answer any questions.