

ALABAMA PRISON TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVE

Overview

The Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) operates 28 correctional facilities in 17 counties throughout Alabama. These facilities have an architectural design capacity to house 13,318 inmates. The ADOC currently houses over 24,000 inmates, resulting in an occupancy rate over 180%. The average age of these facilities is approaching 40 years old with approximately \$90 million in deferred maintenance outstanding. The Department of Corrections is authorized to have 5,832 employees but is currently staffed with 3,818, resulting in an overall staffing level of 65%.

Governor Bentley's Alabama Prison Transformation Initiative will consolidate 14 high and medium custody level prisons into four large scale, state-of-the-art, regional correctional facilities. Three facilities will house 4,000 male inmates each, and one facility will house 1,200 female inmates.

Build for the Future

Forty-year-old correctional facilities require labor intensive security management operations to properly oversee offenders. In order to ensure a safe, secure and humane environment moving forward, the most cost effective long term approach is to replace existing facilities with large state-of-the-art, operationally efficient regional prisons. A viable prison build program in Alabama would require three new regional prisons designed to house 4,000 male offenders each and one new female prison designed to house 1,200 offenders, resulting in a net design capacity increase of approximately 3000 beds. The proposal would allow the department to close 14 existing major prisons, consolidating the operations into four new facilities. New operationally efficient prisons operate at security staffing ratios close to 15:1, allowing the Department to use current employees to fully staff new facilities providing effective and safe population management and freeing resources to invest in rehabilitation. In addition to security staffing efficiencies, large scale regional facilities allow for support and medical staff consolidation as well as the potential for on-site medical care facilities designed to reduce both security and transportation costs.

Invest in Rehabilitation and Recidivism

Redesigning the entire system allows ADOC to balance resources toward offender rehabilitation and reentry programs that have taken a back seat to the security issues facing the department. State-of-the-Art facilities allow for the delivery of a host of evidenced-based reentry programs providing education, vocational training, prison industry, and work release opportunities, that prepare offenders to transition successfully back into the community upon release and significantly lowering recidivism.

Paying for the Plan

ADOC proposes siting the facilities in the northern, central, and southern regions of the State close enough to current prison locations to reduce the impact to our existing workforce. Increased design capacity coupled with recent prison reform legislation designed to decrease the prison population would reduce prison occupancy rates to 125%. This proposal requires borrowing approximately \$800 million through a bond issue. The debt would be serviced through a combination of reduced annual personnel cost, operational savings achieved through consolidation of facilities, supply, logistics, and transportation costs, and reduced medical and mental health costs. The construction period is estimated to be approximately 36 months. The women's facility is scheduled to be the first one to begin.