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## GOVERNMENT FINANCE - REGIONAL JAIL STUDY SUBCOMMITTEE

Thursday, December 11, 2025  
Roughrider Room, State Capitol  
Bismarck, North Dakota

Representative Gregory Stemen, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**Members present:** Representatives Gregory Stemen, Jason Dockter, Craig Headland, Lisa Meier, Mike Nathe, Vicky Steiner; Senators Jeff Barta, Donald Schaible

**Member absent:** Senator Richard Marcellais

**Others present:** Senator Brad Bekkedahl, Williston, member of the Legislative Management Tom Erhardt and Rachelle Juntunen, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; Starr Klemetsrud and Dan Kraft, Lake Region Law Enforcement Center; Donnell Preskey, North Dakota Association of Counties; Trent Wangen, Burleigh Morton Detention Center

Mr. Alex Cronquist, Senior Fiscal Analyst, Legislative Council, presented a memorandum entitled [Regional Correctional Facility Study - Background Memorandum](#). He noted North Dakota Century Code Section 12-22.1-24 requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) to conduct annual compliance inspections at correctional facilities in the state to assess health and safety conditions, security, rehabilitation programs, recreation, treatment programs, and personnel training.

Ms. Rachelle Juntunen, Deputy Director of Adult Services, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, presented information ([Appendix A](#)) regarding inmate capacity, placement of inmates sentenced to DOCR in local jails, and the planning for a new minimum security correctional center.

In response to committee member questions, Ms. Juntunen noted:

- Local jails have the authority to refuse custody of DOCR inmates;
- Placement of inmates in out-of-state facilities may be more cost-effective than placement in local jails, but the inmate would be farther from home and the funding would be leaving the state; and
- DOCR is no longer negotiating the placement of inmates in the Grand Forks County Correctional Center.

Mr. Tom Erhardt, Chief Parole and Probation Officer, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, presented information ([Appendix B](#)) regarding the status of the Reentry Housing Task Force. He noted recommendations and procedures are being developed to expand eligibility requirements for housing assistance programs; improve awareness of available housing options; and improve coordination among housing providers, the Department of Health and Human Services, and DOCR.

Mr. Trent Wangen, Assistant Jail Administrator, Burleigh Morton Detention Center, presented information ([Appendix C](#)) regarding the center. He noted:

- Funding for the Burleigh Morton Detention Center is provided by Burleigh County and Morton County, but it is operated by the Burleigh County Sheriff's Department.



- The facility has 555 beds and 93 staff, including correctional officers and nursing, behavioral health, programming, maintenance, and clerical staff.
- The facility is entering an agreement with DOCR for 120 guaranteed beds, pending final approval of the facility's Jail Governance Committee.

Mr. Dan Kraft, Captain, Lake Region Law Enforcement Center, presented information ([Appendix D](#)) regarding inmates held at the center.

Ms. Starr Klemetsrud, Director, Lake Region Law Enforcement Center, presented information ([Appendix E](#)) regarding programming and operational challenges at the Lake Region Law Enforcement Center. She noted the center has multiple facility-related challenges, including the age of the facility, space constraints, and kitchen and laundry issues.

Ms. Donnell Preskey, Government and Public Relations Specialist, North Dakota Association of Counties, presented information ([Appendix F](#)) regarding jail population trends and recent expansion projects. She noted there are 19 local and regional jail facilities in the state, of which 16 have an agreement with DOCR to house inmates sentenced to DOCR. She added that 11 correctional centers have been expanded or newly built since 2017 and three counties have indicated a need to expand or replace their facilities.

No further business appearing, Chairman Stemen adjourned the meeting at 11:54 a.m.

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Alex J. Cronquist  
Senior Fiscal Analyst

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