

**SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS:
A Costly Breach of Public Trust**

South Carolina taxpayers are footing the bill for a prison system riddled with fraud, mismanagement, and corruption. From guard smuggled contraband to multi-million-dollar misuses of funds, recent revelations show a pattern of financial abuse that goes far beyond isolated incidents. Millions of dollars are being taken from South Carolina residents (including prisoners) and wasted -- without most people in the public even being aware -- and SCDC fear tactics to justify needs for even more tax dollars. Using things like for the sake of "public safety" while asking for millions more unneeded funds.

They want millions more to "jam" cellphones, when it's mostly their own guards bringing the contraband into the prisons. They keep up class barriers now in visitation, saying it's to "prevent contraband" all the while the guards walk in with it; and, its prison guards of all ranks: Christine Livingston, a former "captain" at Broad River Correctional Institution, pleaded guilty to accepting \$219,000 in bribes to smuggle 173 cellphones into the prison. Later, BRCI used a stinger style catcher system to detect all the phones and then contacted the carriers to blacklist them and turn them off, rendering them inoperable. NO JAMMERS or millions of dollars were needed, and it's an approved method by the FCC versus the illegal jammers SCDC cried for with previous prison director Bryan Stirling, who was director during the deadliest prison riot in U.S. history for over 25 years -- and did not seemed to be held accountable for the deaths, mishandling of the prisons, or the millions of dollars he wasted. Instead, he blamed the FCC for not allowing him the use of illegal technology. When all he really had to do was hire better guards that actually did their jobs. And admit that women have no place as guards inside men's prisons where the men sleep, shower, and live (they are the ones bringing in most contraband). Tax dollars are paying these guards. SCDC does not need millions of dollars, and "jammers", they just need better employees. (Note: there are some good staff members in the mix, trying to do their jobs, but they are outnumbered by the corrupt).

At Turbeville Correctional Institution, officials mismanaged \$33,000 in federal grant money meant for inmates education/rehabilitation. An internal "investigation" confirmed the misuse, but real accountability was limited. SCDC is failing to invest in long-term safety, because it is a well known fact that rehabilitation trumps everything when it comes to how to deal with prisoners. Education is more important than being lazy and just locking them all behind doors and doing nothing to prepare them for societal re-entry.

Mismanagement starts at the top. In 2024 the state reported a phantom surplus of \$1.8 billion that obviously didn't exist. And SCDC began a spending spree of buying. While I was working in prison industries, we were having to replace signs statewide as they were looking for things to spend the phantom surplus on with increased "budget" money from taxpayers. When it turned

out that there WAS NO EXTRA FUNDS, the spending came to a halt. A hiring freeze was even enacted and all the guards had sad faces from realization that none of the extra money they thought was coming, ever existed. Where's the accountability? These problems are not about cellphones or prisoners, they are about state and prison leadership. The lack of oversight, transparency, and consequence allows corruption to thrive while public funds disappear. This isn't just a broken system -- it's an expensive mistake in trust.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE

- * Enforce Independent audits of prison operations and budgets, and forbid re-allotment of funds.
- * Increase public transparency into disciplinary actions, finances, and staff misconduct.
- * End the culture of secrecy that protects employees of SCDC over the public. There is no excuse, the ~~public~~ public pays for the prisons and all the employee paychecks affording public right to know EVERYTHING.
- * Invest in education and rehabilitation instead of more fences and magical "Jammers" that are not the true problem. Destroy the current bureaucracy that is broken, and install a new system of rehabilitation and parole eligibility for all prisoners.
- * As for "cellphones" no millions of dollars or "jammers" are needed; instead use the technology at hand that obviously does work (I know it does, because the catcher stinger system used killed all the phones here we knew of. To give them more millions, is idiotic I believe because it's just more money into a corrupt system. The issue is the guards and staff.

The bottom line is that taxpayers are paying for a system that doesn't work. South Carolina's prisons are not just failing prisoners (dubbed inmates to dehumanize them) -- they're failing the public, and it's the prison bureaucracy that's endangering and scamming taxpayers. Without real reform, giving more good money into the corrupt, dangerous, and ineffective SCDC is only kicking the proverbial can further down the road. Prisoners being rehabilitated and prepared for release is the priority.

From my view, inside, I see so much stuff wrong that no one in the public seems to be aware of. There needs to be an audit of SCDC, and it needs to be done by someone outside of the system that knows no one in SCDC, or in South Carolina government. They will see over the past two decades millions of misused or wasted tax dollars -- that has come with almost no accountability whatsoever. I have seen prison employees responsible for the loss of lawsuits due to their idiocy that cost taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars, yet they still work here -- and have even more lawsuits against SCDC due to their actions, and still ... here they are. The only times we see accountability is when outside law enforcement has to come in and arrest a prison guard for prostitution, smuggling contraband, or something crazy that no one would even have thought of.

SCDC screams that they are short of staff, and they are, and for good reason. No one wants to work in this environment, and for some reason people like Bryan Stirling thought throwing millions of dollars and magical cellphone jammers at it would fix the problem. But, the problem is within the prison's own administration, policy, and state laws.

You cannot lock away humans like animals and treat them as subhuman, expecting them to behave. It's not going to happen. Even the nicest dog, will fucking bite you if it's backed into a corner, hungry, abused, and has nothing to gain or lose. It's a easy fix, but the prisons don't want it fixed. Because more prison violence means they can go ask for more money, because after they claim it's for "public safety" the state signs over the millions they want -- and in the meantime those of us inside, see nothing change, and wonder where the money went. We see the same fences, the same cars patrol, less and less guards, and the food is lower quality and smaller portions. Parole was removed, except for pedophiles and drug dealers (they have parole), most of us have no parole eligibility, with nothing to gain or lose whatsoever. A person like me, that still doesn't effect who I am or what I do. But, there are all the thousands of young black gang members who will commonly say that since nothing matters, then fuck it, they are going to do whatever they want. And they do. It ends up creating a very dangerous environment for the guards and other prisoners like myself. There is nothing for them, and it's been purposely designed this way by prison staff who believe that anyone in prison should be in a cell, 24/7, and drink water and eat bread, with no contact with the outside world. Even though, most do have a release date. The smart thing to do, would be to rehabilitate EVERYONE possible.

I agree, there are some lost causes in here. Prisoners like those who fucked their own kids, or anyone elses, should remain here. And that's because of what I see: they come in, grab a Bible, and say they are "forgiven" while going around sucking each others dicks every chance they get. Why? Because sexually deviant to the core, and it shows. They cling together like a virus. But, everyone else should have hope. We should have parole eligibility! We should have better education access, and paying jobs for everyone. AS FOR CELLPHONES, we have tablets and all the administration has to do is activate things in it like other states have. For some reason, SCDC felt they needed to remove things like Pluto TV, and video messages with family. If they just gave those two things, and gave us other things to connect us to the world to better re-integrate us into society. Prisoners would no longer buy contraband cellphones from female guards/staff. Because I can honestly

say that probably 50 percent of the contraband cellphones used were guys talking to family, and watching Netflix. So if SCDC added that back to the tablets like other states currently have -- a lot of the problem would be fixed. Give the prisoners game systems. Other states offer prisoners ways to buy and use video games systems. Other states have lots of prison industry that pay prisoners so that they can prepare for release. It provides a form rehabilitation teaching a job skill and giving them money so that upon release they are less likely to commit a crime just so they can eat. South Carolina currently has a prison industry, but it's shrunk significantly in recent years under mismanagement and is now facing a multi-million dollar lawsuit⁹ by a multitude of prisoner employees that had their pay shortened illegally by the state -- yet, another corruption within SCDC. And considering that the same people are over it, and making more money, there's not been any accountability for all the lawsuits they have cost tax payers.

The bottom line is -- stop treating prisoners like trash. Prisoners are people and most will be out and could be living next door to you one day. So ... why treat them as less-than-human and cut them off from any communication with family and friends. Even now, someone got a idea to further mistreat SCDC prisoners by saying that soon no one will be able to send money to a prisoners account unless they are a family member and on their approved visitation list. It's just another way to dehumanize the prisoners. They know a lot of prisoners have no living family, or get no visits, and that they receive money from an old girlfriend, a cousin, high school friend, people like that. Even myself, I have had old coworkers send me money, I even reconnected with an old girlfriend from 1999 that I was madly in love with -- being in prison, you never know who might write one day or reach out. But SCDC seems to frown on that. Even though, societal connections ~~that~~ that are positive, are certainly pro-rehabilitative. It just looks like a lot of what SCDC is doing and claiming is for "public safety" is really just done out of hateful spite.

SCDC promotes homosexuality, we have HIV positive guys working in the kitchen who keep getting caught in sexual acts, but yet a week later they are back at work. The supervisor makes a special tray, takes a photo of it, and tells headquarters that's what the food trays have and look like, but it's a lie. Every meal is missing stuff. The menu says coffee, yet I have not seen coffee in the kitchen in about 10 years. Where's the coffee money at the taxpayers are supposedly paying for? And, that's just the tip of the stolen iceberg. If you look at the SCDC menu, it is NOT what we are getting. Yet, what's on that fake menu is what taxpayers are paying for.

I could go on for hundreds of pages, but the point is: someone needs to do an audit of SCDC and start considering indictments. They need to NOT give more money, but instead cut the budget a minimum of 10 percent and downsize. Consider this, when SCDC is 200, 500, or 700, guards short ... where is the salary that was given in the budget for those positions? Paychecks that taxes payed to cover, but were not given to anyone ... where is it? 700 at \$50,000 is 3.5 million ... WTF, and I am lowballing it. What was done with it? All anyone needs to do is look, and care to ask.

