



Washington State Legislature

Governor Jay Inslee,
Secretary Cheryl Strange, WA St Department of Corrections,

August 8, 2023

We, the undersigned members of the Clark County Delegation, are writing to express our strong opposition to the planned closure of Larch Correctional Center (LCC) in October 2023 by the Department of Corrections (DOC).

LCC plays a crucial role in our community by providing family wage jobs and valuable rehabilitation training opportunities for incarcerated individuals. The dedicated forest firefighting crews and inmate work crews at Larch have been instrumental in saving the state millions of dollars through forest and stream restoration efforts.

The closure would impede positive relationships and hinder efforts to reduce recidivism since access to visitation is crucial for incarcerated individuals. LCC is the only DOC facility in Southwest Washington, allowing most incarcerated individuals to have family nearby. Closing LCC would result in sending them to facilities much further away, reducing their visitation rates and weakening community ties.

Larch plays an essential role in transitioning incarcerated individuals by providing mental health services and addiction treatment, reflecting our commitment to community-level care. Moving towards warehousing individuals would be a step backward and compromise safety. The unique opportunities and personal guidance offered at LCC are challenging to replicate in larger facilities, making it an essential rehabilitation center for the DOC.

Additionally, the relationship between LCC and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is vital. Incarcerated individuals working on DNR crews receive invaluable character development and self-worth, helping fight forest wildfires and safeguarding nearby communities. While other camps have some DNR crew relationship, they lack the same level of medical care and are located in the NW region of the state, making Larch's presence in SW Washington even more crucial.

In light of these concerns, we urge you to reconsider the decision to close Larch Correctional Center (LCC) and work towards preserving its invaluable contributions to our community and the state at large.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Sharon Wylie

49th LD State Representative



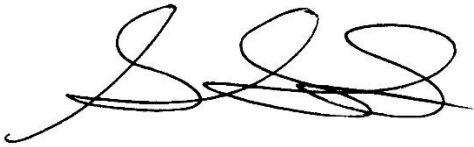
Monica Stonier

49th LD State Representative



Annette Cleveland

49th LD State Senator



Greg Cheney

18th LD State Representative



Stephanie McClintock

18th LD State Representative



Ann Rivers

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