

**Judiciary Committee
Public Hearing**

March 24, 2009

Testimony of Theresa C. Lantz, Commissioner, Department of Correction

Good afternoon, Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. I am Theresa Lantz, Commissioner for the Department of Correction and submit this testimony on the following bill:

Raised Bill No. 6704 An Act Concerning Prison Overcrowding

The Department supports Section 11 of the Governor's Bill 6363, which would restore the Commissioner's discretion to place qualified inmates on furlough with up to 45 days of community service. The Governor's proposal does not restrict reentry furlough to non-violent offenders. Prior to its elimination last year, and prior to the enhancements of community supervision strategies implemented in the past year, the 30-day furlough program had a 97% successful completion rate. This was clearly the most successful discretionary release program available to the incarcerated population and highly cost effective.

In addition to my support of the Governor's initiative, the Department is on track to provide by April 1, 2009, a report concerning the estimated number of inmates that would be released and the cost savings that would be achieved if the authority of the commissioner to grant reentry furloughs under section 18-101a of the general statutes was restored as of July 1, 2009. The report will provide various options for the Legislature to consider.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on Raised Bill No. 6704 bills.