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Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Gavin Newsom,

I write you today on behalf of my constituents in Congressional District 1, and more specifically, the community of Susanville, and Lassen County. Recently, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) declared the closing of the California Correctional Center (CCC) in Susanville. Closing this facility will have far reaching affects for Northern California, including a massive reduction in firefighting inmate crews further harming our ability to respond to wildfire threats in rural areas. Closing the CCC is paired with additional prison sentencing changes will speed the releases of more unrehabilitated criminals back onto our streets, harming the state's ability to protect our citizen and create more victims of crime. Closing this facility would have huge financial repercussions in the economy of Susanville and Lassen County, with many jobs being transferred out of the community. I urge you to reconsider this decision as the shutdown of the CCC would cripple the community economically.

The CCC houses over 2,000 inmates and 1,000 employees in and around Susanville. The CCC facility is the second largest employer in Lassen County and removing these jobs will have a negative ripple effect throughout the entire North State. The ramifications are already being felt in Susanville as housing values around the community have plummeted with just the announcement of closing the CCC. This is a rural community that has already faced significant financial hardships since policies passed in Washington and Sacramento restrict timber operations and mining opportunities.

Furthermore, the CCC also trains inmate firefighters who staff 14 firefighting camps in Northern California. Now is not the time to further reduce our manpower when it comes to the threat of deadly wildfire. With the traditional fire season now becoming a year-round threat, it is essential that we have more firefighting crews available, not less. Eliminating these valuable assets of the firefighting camps, and the correctional center in Susanville, which in a very isolated and rural county has lower relative overhead costs to the state, does not make sense. We can surely expect catastrophic wildfires this year with the drought, and this decision will come with a costly price tag to California in terms of private property lost, lives impacted and wasted timber resources, among damage to the air we breathe.

Closing the CCC along with altering corrections policies that increase good time credits for convicted criminals, results in earlier releases, more inmates onto our streets, and added risk to our communities. The state has already committed to the early release of additional inmates through the good time credit program and that has been accelerated by COVID-19, making another 76,000 inmates eligible. All while the states recidivism rate hangs around 47%, which puts us as one of the highest rates nationally. Per the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, this percentage has only changed slightly over

the last decade. The current policy of early release is not working and shutting down an additional prison would decrease the number of holding cells and put even more violent offenders back on the streets, increasing crime in all our communities.

At a time when the state budget is flush with both federal funds and record tax receipts, we should be focused on ensuring we are successful at our top priority to our citizens; keeping them safe from criminals and natural disasters. Expanding good time credits and releasing prisoners who have served less than half of their sentence will only result in more victimization of the honest citizens of California.

Further, inmates being let out early with unearned good time credits, create a disincentive to join programs that can turn their life around. Programs such as the fire camps and the job training they provide, increases public safety and offers quality life-changing options to offenders. The CCC in Lassen County provides opportunities the state needs to train inmates to fight fires and ensures a community stays economically viable despite a vanished timber industry that had previously funded the county. The CCC in Lassen also keeps the state safe by securing potentially repeat offenders away from the public while they have a chance to change their ways. The policy your administration is pursuing changes a current win-win scenario for the state and local area into a lose-lose for Lassen County. The Correctional Officers and families, as well as statewide firefighting efforts, are being dramatically harmed by these actions.

I urge you to reconsider this decision as shutting down CCC operations in Susanville, would have far reaching ramifications for not only our region, but for California as a whole.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Doug LaMalfa". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress

DL:dm