



NEWS RELEASE

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Union “disappointed” at announced closure of Hocking Correctional

Westerville – Today, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction told the union representing most Corrections employees, that it will close Hocking Correctional Facility (HCF) early this year. Hocking is part of the Southeastern Correctional Complex that is made up of two facilities, one in Lancaster and one in Hocking.

The Hocking prison has 110 staff members, with approximately 86 of those union members of the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association, the largest state employee union.

After learning about the closure, union leaders met with senior DR&C officials to discuss ways to ensure job opportunities to those affected. “DR&C has made a commitment that everyone who wants a job within the agency will have one. We’re going to hold their feet to the fire,” said OCSEA President Chris Mabe.

While rumors had swirled for a year about the facility closing, the union is still disappointed about the announcement. “It’s still a shock and will be a big loss to that community,” said Mabe. “That’s 110 jobs in an area that can’t afford to lose 110 jobs,” he said.

The union also warns that any closures of Ohio prisons could take a toll on an already overcrowded prison population. “We know that DR&C has not reduced its inmate population as they had expected to. This closure could make a bad situation even worse, leading to increased levels of overcrowding and violence, which is always a concern for us,” said Mabe.

“The union will be fighting tooth and nail to ensure DR&C follows our contract and that our members are able to utilize all their employment rights,” said Mabe.

OCSEA represents approximately 30,000 state and local government employees who work in a wide range of security, regulatory, administrative, direct care, maintenance, customer service and other positions. OCSEA represents 8,600 employees in DR&C. For more information, contact Sally Meckling, 614-865-2602 or 614-404-3881 (cell).