

Senators

My name is Matthew McConnell, I am the Chairman of the Mercer County Commissioners.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak here today, as I realize this body does not have the authority in this matter, but the Governor and his Secretary John Wetzel of the DOC I hope will be listening. I drove the 4 hours this morning to have my 2 minutes because I believe it will be the first time the local leaders are heard from.

I hold our local paper that quotes Governor Wolf tilted “Wolf Says he is Listening”. He says “...Too many middle-class and working-class families are hurting.” If that is so please hear us now!

The details of the closure study when referring to the SCI – Mercer are flawed:

- Many of the future expenditure for capital improvement are not future but are completed and the numbers don't reflect that.
- Design obsolescence of the institutions did not appear to be considered. Mercer was designed, built and upgraded to current Jail technology. This might account for no riots and low incidents at SCI-Mercer.
- The 5.5% unemployment doesn't represent the current situation where many employees will be without jobs shortly due to:
 - The layoff of GM Lordstown plant third shift.
 - The closing of Macy's

- The closing of Sears
- The layoff at GE
- The pending move of the Office of Personal Management further away from Mercer County
- We already expect the unemployment to spike in the next 6 months without the SCI Closure.

Mr Governor I respect your desire to curtail expenses of the tax payer but to do so without the full truth, is reckless and could be hurtful to a community that is hurting as you described.

Your decision would not be open. Your decision would not be transparent. Your decision would not be rational. And your decision will not bring the highest efficiencies.

Mr Governor we share a business background, please apply those principles that are self evident in the private sector to this decision.

Please hear us now!