



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

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Press Release

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District Attorney Visits Prison Facilities

The Legislature formed the Prison Population Management Interim Study Committee in May 2019. The committee studies strategies to safely reduce the prison population and decrease recidivism and analyzes prison population reform legislation passed by the General Assembly. The committee is composed of six legislators and twelve non-legislative members. District Attorney Michael Dougherty serves on the committee on behalf of the District Attorneys of Colorado.

Over the past two days, District Attorney Michael Dougherty joined in a tour of prison facilities. Committee members visited facilities in different parts of the state that varied by custody level, treatment programs, and offender length of stay. District Attorney Dougherty and other members of the committee visited the Buena Vista Correctional Facility, Canon City Correctional Complex (including CSP, CSP II, and Fremont Correctional Facility), La Vista Correctional Facility (women's facility), and the Crowley County Correctional Facility (private prison).

The Prison Population Management Interim Study Committee is focused on reducing recidivism, particularly since Colorado's rate of re-offense ranks among the ten worst in the nation. On average, forty-eight (48) percent of all offenders released from state prison are back in a Colorado state prison within three years. The committee has also been discussing and analyzing the programming and treatment available in different facilities, the use of private prisons, and perspectives on community reentry. In addition to the prison tour, the Committee has held hearings and heard testimony on five dates. The next hearing is scheduled for October 30, 2019.

District Attorney Michael Dougherty stated, "It is important for prosecutors—as both elected leaders and criminal justice system stakeholders—to understand and see firsthand the conditions in the places where individuals serve their sentences. I learned a lot from candid conversations with the leadership, staff members, and offenders at each facility. This trip was very helpful to the work on the committee. As a state, we must push to reduce Colorado's high recidivism rate and improve community reentry for those who are completing their sentences. Failing to do so comes at the expense of victims, offenders, our community, and the taxpayers."

Photos are attached.