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To: Director Heidi E. Washington, Michigan Department of Corrections

The Michigan Legislative Black Caucus (MLBC) expresses deep concern regarding ongoing and well-documented issues at Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility (WHV), the state's only prison for women. Reports from incarcerated individuals, advocacy organizations, and oversight bodies paint a troubling picture of conditions that raise serious questions about the humane treatment, safety, and rehabilitation opportunities for the citizens housed there.

Over the years, WHV has been the subject of repeated public scrutiny and legal action, with concerns including inadequate medical and mental health care, unsanitary food services, unsafe environmental conditions such as mold and poor ventilation, insufficient staffing and training, and violations of dignity through excessive strip searches. These systemic failures have persisted despite previous interventions, consent decrees, and public commitments to reform.

The Caucus is particularly alarmed by the current case of Ms. Krystal Clark, whose urgent health needs underscore broader deficiencies in medical responsiveness within the facility. This case highlights the unacceptable risks posed by delayed care, lack of specialist access, and insufficient oversight of medical contractors.

The MLBC calls upon the Michigan Department of Corrections to take the following immediate and long-term actions:

1. **Immediate Medical Intervention** – Ensure prompt, comprehensive, and specialist-guided care for Ms. Clark and any other incarcerated individuals with urgent or chronic medical needs.
2. **Independent Facility Audit** – Commission an external, independent review of WHV's health care, environmental safety, food service, and staffing practices, with findings made public.
3. **Environmental Remediation** – Immediately address mold and HVAC deficiencies through certified remediation, with priority given to housing units impacting medically vulnerable populations.

4. **Enhanced Training and Staffing** – Implement mandatory, recurrent training on trauma-informed care, mental health crisis response, de-escalation techniques, and constitutional search protocols.
5. **Labor Standards Reform** – Ensure fair compensation for prison labor and eliminate punitive job-loss practices tied to grievances or disciplinary action without due process.
6. **Transparency and Accountability** – Publish quarterly reports on health care delivery, environmental inspections, staffing levels, and incident statistics at WHV.

The Michigan Legislative Black Caucus will continue to monitor the treatment of citizens at WHV and other correctional facilities under MDOC's purview, and stands ready to work with the Governor's Office, the Department of Corrections, the Legislative Corrections Ombudsman, and advocacy groups to ensure that the rights and dignity of incarcerated women in Michigan are fully protected.

Incarceration must never mean neglect. We are committed to ensuring that every Michigander, regardless of their circumstances, is treated with humanity, dignity, and respect under the law.

Michigan Legislative Black Caucus

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