



Maryland Classified Employees Association, inc.

NEWS RELEASE

July 26, 2006

Contact:

Janet Anderson
Dir. of Communications
410-298-8800 or
1-888-611-MCEA, x233

Headquarters:

7127 Rutherford Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21244-2763
1-888-611-MCEA

Eastern Shore Office
1229 Mt. Hermon Rd.
Salisbury, MD 21804
410-749-9135
1-888-610-MCEA (6232)

www.mcea.org

Allen Evans
President

Robert Stephens
Interim Executive Director

Vicious CO murder prompts MCEA call for Governor's intervention, new management at DPSCS, DOC

MCEA is calling for the Governor's immediate intervention into the state's correctional crisis, in light of last night's fatal stabbing of David McGuinn, a two-year Correctional Officer at the Maryland House of Correction in Jessup.

"The dangerous and vicious environment in our prisons, particularly at the House, need to be the Governor's priority," stated Robert Stephens, MCEA Interim Executive Director. "Our Correctional Officers understand their job holds risks, but we cannot send them to work with inmates just laying in wait to exploit an already volatile situation and attack."

In a June 8 letter (attached) to MHC Warden William Williams, Division of Correction Commissioner Frank Sizer and Secretary Mary Ann Saar, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. MCEA reported a number of safety concerns that Correctional Officers had relayed to union officials at a recent MCEA meeting.

"... After death threats have been made against several officers, management has not removed or relocated any of the perpetrators from the prison or surrounding area of the prison," the letter warned. "The inmates making threats are being allowed to stay in the same area, unpunished and undeterred."

Corrections officials never responded.

MCEA called for Saar and Sizer to be replaced in January, when Officer Jeffery Wroten was killed by an inmate. MCEA is renewing that call.

"The crisis has worsened under Saar and Sizer. Our officers and prison staff deserve leadership that has their safety issues as their number one priority - and not inmate privileges. Let's get enough experienced officers in these dangerous prisons and give them the training and support they need so we don't continue to lose lives," Stephens said. "No more empty talk. No more tragedies. We need action."

Today, a gang-related inmate riot broke out at the Maryland Correctional Training Center in Hagerstown. Ron Smith, a former Correctional Officer who currently works as an MCEA Labor Relations Specialist, said he's been told that DOC has eliminated gang recognition training for officers.

MCEA — the State's oldest and largest independent labor organization for Maryland public employees.