

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

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Public Facing Advocacy Writing

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COLUMBUS- Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) Director Gary Mohr's statement to statehouse media on Tuesday that he would not seek to privatize more state-owned prisons is the right decision for the state, according to the ACLU of Ohio, who added that he should extend this logic to any future plans for privatizing prison services like healthcare and food.

Despite millions spent by private companies trying to convince policy makers and local governments otherwise, numerous studies have shown private prisons put their own profit ahead of good public policy, said ACLU Director of Communications and Public Policy Mike Brickner. ODRC is wise to see that the privatization model distracts from their important efforts to shrink inmate population and reduce recidivism.

ODRC should go a step further by making a commitment not to privatize additional prison services such as food and medical care, added Brickner. Arguments for privatizing these services use the same faulty logic as the arguments for privatizing entire prisons.

In 2012 Ohio became the first state in the nation to sell a state facility to a private prison company. Following the sale, the ACLU of Ohio, along with a broad coalition of policy and religious groups, urged all states to reject any further offers by Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) to buy and privatize state prisons. CCA is the nation's largest private prison company and Mohr's former employer.

Ohio is finally taking steps toward reforming our bloated prison system, said Brickner. Private prisons, by their very nature, have the opposite goal. These are corporations that have a vested financial interest in ensuring that prisons remain full.

In 2011, the ACLU of Ohio released a report entitled [Prisons For Profit: A Look at Prison Privatization](#). The report details the history of private prisons in America and concludes that they create many long-term problems for state and local governments.

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