

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.acluohio.org/en/press-releases/another-bad-inspection-cca-owned-lake-erie-correctional-institution>

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CONNEAUT, OH For the second time in six months, Correction Corporation of Americas (CCA) privately owned Lake Erie Correctional Institution (LaECI) has received a dismal report from prison inspectors.

The report, issued Friday by the Correctional Institution Inspection Committee (CIIC) presents some very alarming statistics. From 2010-2012, inmate-on-inmate assaults at LaECI have increased by over 180 percent while inmate-on-staff assaults increased by over 300 percent. Inmate violations for fighting have increased 40 percent, and the total number of prison disturbances in 2012 doubled in comparison to prior years.

Overall, the facility was rated in need of improvement in most of the major CIIC evaluation categories.

Local law enforcement is being overwhelmed by increased crime and smuggling activity outside this facility, and now another inspection uncovers serious, systemic problems on the inside, said ACLU Director of Communications and Public Policy Mike Brickner. This is in addition to last September's audit which found dozens of safety, health, and security issues as well as an inmate death in November, likely from heroin smuggled into the facility.

CCA promised to save Ohio money. Instead they continue to cut corners while keeping the profits and shifting the responsibility back to the taxpayers, added Brickner. Its time for Ohio to seriously reconsider whether LaECI should be privately managed.

In addition to the spike in violent activity at LaECI, the CIIC report also found that inmates are not being held accountable for violating the rules. Over 6.5 percent have tested positive for illegal substances in the last six months. Additionally, the inmates themselves told inspectors that the prison staff attempts mostly to avoid confrontation and lacks control over the prison population.

Unfortunately this pattern is not unique to Conneaut, said Brickner. Cities that house private prisons find that the big promises soon become stark realities of higher crime, increased burdens on local government, and unsafe conditions for inmates, employees, and the surrounding community.

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. In 2012, Ohio became the first state in the nation to sell a state facility to a private prison company when it sold the Lake Erie Correctional Facility to CCA.

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