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## Idaho State Senate

### SENATOR CHERIE BUCKNER-WEBB Assistant Minority Leader

March 12, 2018

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee  
Attn: Co-chair Senator Cliff Bayer  
Attn: Co-chair Representative Mat Erpelding

Dear Senator Bayer and Representative Erpelding,

The Southwest Idaho Treatment Center (SWITC) has been featured in a series of news media pieces featuring complaints of abuse and neglect of residents. In July 2017, SWITC's license was suspended for being out of compliance in the areas of governance and management, client protections, facility staffing, active treatment services, and client behavior-related facility practices. In September 2017, a subsequent review found SWITC out of compliance with minimum standards in all of these same areas. Although the license was restored in October 2017, complaints of serious problems in these areas persist.

During the period that verified client abuse was occurring, the Department of Health and Welfare sought and obtained statutory authority to create a new facility (the Developmental Disability Secure Facility), for some of the same residents, which would *not need* to meet the federal standards for client protection and active treatment. The new facility would be housed on SWITC grounds and administered and staffed by the same people. As Idaho starts this new facility, funded by state general fund dollars without the federal Medicaid match, we would be well served to have a complete understanding of the serious problems and compliance failures at SWITC as well as whether improved management, staffing, and training could resolve these issues.

We request the following questions be specifically addressed by the Office of Performance Evaluations:

1. What roles do the Developmental Disability Council and Department of Health and Welfare have over SWITC?
2. What governance and accountability models are already in place?
3. Is there a conflict of interest presented by Licensing & Certification overseeing SWITC?
4. In addition to meeting minimum federal and state licensing standards, do SWITC practices align with best treatment standards? We're specifically interested in:
  - a. Staffing ratios and qualifications being sufficient for the population
  - b. Management practices for supervising and overseeing direct care staff
  - c. Training to address medication management
  - d. Training and oversight regarding individual treatment plans

March 12, 2018

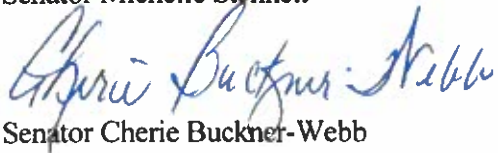
Page 2

- e. The notice and inclusion of guardians in treatment planning following an incident
- f. Collection of trauma history to implement trauma-informed treatment
- g. Training and oversight of trauma-informed care

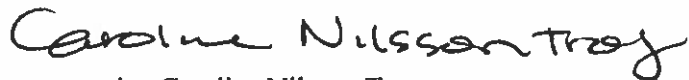
Sincerely,



Senator Michelle Stennett



Senator Cherie Buckner-Webb



Representative Caroline Nilsson Troy