



EXPERT PENOLOGIST'S REPORT

on the

JULIA TUTWILER PRISON

WETUMPKA, ALABAMA

Submitted by:

**E. Eugene Miller
Washington, D.C.**

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INTRODUCTION

From July 6 - 8, 1994, I inspected the Julia Tutwiler prison in Wetumpka, Alabama, at the request of the United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division's Special Litigation Section. During the course of my inspection, I was accompanied by Ms. S. Brown and Mr. C. Cheng, attorneys from the Department of Justice, as well as by counsel representing the Alabama Department of Corrections. The purpose of the inspection was to assess adequacy or inadequacy of the prison's operations from a penological perspective. Other experts, retained by the Department of Justice, made similar inspections related to the issues of environmental health and safety, health services, mental health services.

The methodology of my inspection was, as follows: a complete tour of the prison's physical plant; a review of various operational forms a review of Alabama Department of Corrections policies; a review of the prison's "Standard Operating Procedures;" informal conversations with hundreds of inmates in housing units and at work sites; informal conversations with staff; formal interviews of the prison's training officer, an instructor from a nearby regional training center, chief security officer, director of classification, head of the drug and alcohol counseling program, head of the vocational training school, recreation officer, and the librarian; interviews of randomly-selected inmates, observation of the sewing factory while in full operation and while breaking for a meal; observation of the serving of one meal

in the dining hall; a thorough tour of the principal housing units of the prison, as well as death row, segregation and the infirmary; a review of major incident reports for the first six months of 1994, a review of overall population statistics for the thirteen months, beginning April, 1993; and, a review of the training files of two employees.

The observations and opinions contained in this report are based upon the completion of the foregoing tasks, as well as the experience, education and training that I have garnered during nearly thirty years in the field of adult institutional corrections. In preparing this report, I have also consulted the Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 3rd edition, which is published by the American Correctional Association. I reserve the right to delete from, add to, or otherwise amend this report, should I receive additional relevant information.

I would like to express my appreciation to Warden Shirlie F. Lobmiller and her staff for their cooperation and assistance during the course of my inspection. Their help greatly facilitated the timely completion of the many tasks involved in conducting the inspection.

BACKGROUND

The Julia Tutwiler Prison is Alabama's only correctional institution for women. The prison consist of two parts, i.e., the larger main prison, which was built in 1942, and the minimum security Edwina Mitchell Center, which is much newer. The stated capacity of the entire prison is 764. On July 6th, (the first day of my inspection), the count was 719.

The primary housing modality is dormitory. The only cells in the prison are in the segregation unit, a very small mental health vocational school and the chapel are all separate and distinct buildings.

CAPACITY

The stated capacity of the prison is 764. This figure is not based on any objective standard, but rather represents the total number of beds in the facility. Thus, the stated capacity includes mental observation cells and the segregation unit. The latter should not be included in a prison's housing inventory, since housing therein is normally on a temporary basis only, beds for the occupants of such units must be available in regular units, and such beds, except in emergencies or other unusual circumstances, should not be used as regular housing for inmates. hence, the stated capacity of the prison should be reduced by the number of beds in the mental health

observation ward and in the segregation unit. Furthermore, the capacity of the regular housing units should be determined by the application of an objective standard, e.g., environmental health requirements. Thus the actual capacity of the prison is certainly less than 764. At current occupancy levels, the Julia Tutwiler Prison appeared to be overcrowded, but not grossly so, from a correctional (vis-a-vis environmental health) perspective. A significant rise in the prison's count would require the addition of more housing units.

STAFFING

Correctional staffing is adequate, but certainly not "fat." Given population levels, the amount of movement, the facility's configuration, the security level of the majority of inmates, and similar factors, there are enough correctional officers to provide effective supervision and perform other, necessary ancillary tasks. The deployment of staff and location of correctional officer posts also appears to be adequate.

STAFF TRAINING

Staff training as it pertains to strictly correctional issues complies with generally accepted practice in the field. All new officers receive eight weeks of basic training, which is followed up with an organized program of on-the-job orientation to this

particular institution. All correctional officers also receive forty hours of in-service training per annum in appropriate subjects.

AGED AND INFIRM INMATES

The Julia Tutwiler Prison has one dormitory in which aged and infirm inmates are housed. This unit is located appropriately right next to the health care unit. On the days of my inspection, this unit housed, among other people, one blind woman and at least one woman confined to a wheelchair. Such people are assigned inmate "aides" to assist them in getting to-and-from the dining hall, getting dressed, and going to-and-from the bathroom. However, the bathroom itself is totally unequipped to deal with the unique needs of non-ambulatory-challenged individuals. Hence, at least one toilet should be suitably equipped to meet the needs of non-ambulatory people: the shower area and the bath tub should also be equipped properly to facilitate the hygienic needs of such people. Aside from these physical plant deficiencies, the inmate "aide" system appears to work well to meet the basic needs of the aged and infirm population.

CLASSIFICATION

Since all women in the system are housed at the Julia Tutwiler Prison, initial reception and diagnostic modalities applicable to male inmates in determining to

which institution they should be sent after orientation are unnecessary with the women. Rather, this prison does have an orientation dormitory, in which new inmates are kept separate from the general population and in which typical orientation and systemic intake functions occur. The prison uses an objective classification system to effect actual housing and job/program assignment thereafter. The system used comports with the generally-accepted practices in the field. Inmates have ready access to classification personnel to request changes in their status and timely, regular, reviews of such status are done routinely.

VOCATIONAL AND ACADEMIC EDUCATION

Educational programs are provided by the J. J. Ingram Technical College. There are sixteen or seventeen vocational programs offered in such widely diverse areas as secretarial skills, floral arrangement, and automotive mechanics. The equipment used in the programs appeared to be modern and state-of-the-art. All instructors are properly certified. The entire vocational program is fully accredited by the appropriate, regional accreditation entity. Approximately 200 women participate in these programs during the day as their full-time assignment (seven hours per day). Another 100 women participate in educational programs at night. The vocational school offers job placement assistance to the women, upon their release. The school and training programs are located in two separate buildings, one of which is rather

new and was designed specifically to house vocational programs. The full-time, on-site program director is a Ph.D. All instructors and the Director fall under the rubric of the State's Department of Post-Secondary Education. In brief, I was very favorably impressed with the apparent quality of the programs offered and the number of inmates participating.

LAW LIBRARY

Although located in rather cramped quarters, the law library has an excellent collection, which is kept current. The law library also has functional typewriters, its own copying machine, and a supply of the more commonly used legal forms. There are a number of notaries on the prison's staff. The law library and small general reading library are supervised by a full-time civilian employee. Inmate clerks are available to assist other inmates in using the law library. In addition, the vocational school has instituted a paralegal course.

General population inmates seem to have frequent and ready access to the law library. Special population groups, e.g., HIV-positive inmates and persons in segregation have access to legal materials, but such access could be improved. Nonetheless, while improvements could and should be made, the current situation does not constitute denial of sufficient access to legal materials.

EXERCISE

Special categories of inmates, e.g., segregation, death row and HIV-positive individuals, all are given daily access to their own separate and distinct exercise areas. In good weather, general population inmates are allowed adequate time in the main exercise yard. The problem is that all of these yards are basically bereft of exercise equipment. For instance, the major yard activity for general population inmates is standing around in the yard. Hence, while yard time is adequate, the opportunity for meaningful exercise is sorely deficient. Hence, the prison should move forward to implement the Recreation Director's plans for a weight shack and a paved basketball court. An adequate amount of other appropriate equipment, e.g., exercise bikes, should also be made available on a regular basis. It should be pointed out that such equipment is purchased with the profits from the inmate canteen and other enterprises that make up the inmate welfare fund and, hence, such items cost the taxpayers nothing. It should also be noted that the prison already appears to have a supply of various physical recreation items, but a check of the relevant log indicates that these items are not regularly made available to the population during yard-out periods.

While the Edwina Mitchell Center has a yard and the women have more freedom, the yard is as poorly equipped to provide meaningful exercise as is that of

the main prison. Hence, prison officials should make plans to provide a weight shack and a paved basketball court or similar physical facilities to facilitate meaningful exercise opportunities at the Edwina Mitchell Center.

A major problem with providing regular opportunities for exercise at this prison is the lack of any alternative to the yard during inclement weather. When the weather is bad, the women essentially are confined to their housing units. The only space that I saw at the prison, which could accommodate a sizeable number of women for indoor exercise purposes is the dining hall, and even that space would have to be scheduled, since it would not accommodate the entire general population. There may well also be scheduling problems related to the need to set-up for and clean-up after meals. In any event, it might be feasible to use the dining hall for passive recreational activities, which would still be much better than having the women confined to their dormitories. Julia Tutwiler Prison officials should explore means of providing alternative indoor exercise and/or recreation space during inclement weather.

AVAILABILITY OF PERSONAL HYGIENE SUPPLIES

Once a month, each woman is issued a supply of personal hygiene supplies, including five rolls of toilet paper, sanitary pads, and several bars of soap. A real

A real problem is encountered, if a woman exhausts her supply of hygiene items before the next monthly distribution. A woman could not even purchase additional sanitary pads from the canteen, since the canteen only stocks tampons. I fully appreciate the administration's legitimate desire to prevent women from wasting supplies. At the same time, providing sufficient personal hygiene supplies is an absolute necessity. The prison should establish some mechanism whereby the women can obtain additional, necessary hygiene supplies on a timely basis. While an informal mechanism may exist currently, it is not ensuring that legitimate needs are being met.

MEALS

On Saturdays and Sundays, only two meals are served, at least in part owing to the fact that the dining hall also functions as the visiting hall. The meals are served at approximately 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. The normal rule-of-thumb in the field is that no more than 14 hours should transpire between the evening meal and breakfast. With the weekend meal schedule, there is an approximate 16 hour gap. Even if a full third meal cannot be provided, there should at least be an additional basic meal, even if it consists of nothing more than a decent sandwich, a piece of fruit, and a beverage. The prison should try to provide some type of third meal on Saturdays and Sundays. There should never be more than a 14 hour interval between the evening meal and breakfast.

HIV-POSITIVE INMATES

Julia Tutwiler Prison segregates women, who have tested positive for HIV. They are housed in the rear of the infirmary. However, the space available for housing purposes is quite limited. A capacity should be established concerning just how many women can be housed in the rear of the infirmary. This capacity should be based upon an appropriate, objective standard(s). e.g., environmental health.

These HIV-positive inmates cannot participate in programs with the other women and can only access areas such as the law library, on a special schedule. This means that the HIV-positive women cannot work in industries and cannot attend the prison's extensive trade school. A modicum of programming is available to these women in their infirmary housing unit. I disagree with the prison's policy on this issue, finding it an extreme over-reaction without justification in the literature of the health risks posed by people who are HIV-positive. On the other hand, I realize that this is also a very complex legal issue. Hence, I would suggest that the policies regarding program participation by HIV-positive inmates be referred to the appropriate entity within the Department of Justice for review.

PERSONAL PRIVACY

Julia Tutwiler Prison does not designate officer posts by gender. Hence both male and female employees can be assigned to any post in the institution. Having a male officer supervising a women's housing unit can present obvious problems with regard to personal privacy, especially if one of the women is relieving herself or in the shower. Several dormitories had make-shift privacy screens in the bathrooms, consisting of a cloth curtain, which would come out to a sitting person's shoulders, between the toilets. This approach meets both privacy needs as well as security requirements. All dormitory bathrooms should be equipped with the cloth curtain type of privacy screen. Several shower areas had full-height shower curtains, but most had nothing at all. Shower curtains can pose a security problem, as it is impossible to see what is transpiring behind them. A simple solution is to install privacy screens in all shower areas. The screens would provide privacy for a person's private parts, while still enabling an officer to observe from the knees down and the shoulders and above. Such an approach would provide a fitting degree of privacy for the women and eliminate the "Officer Smith is leering at me" types of complaints, at least in the showers. All shower areas should be equipped with privacy panels. This very simple step would be a very positive morale factor with many inmates.

PRISON INDUSTRIES

Julia Tutwiler Prison has two industrial programs, i.e., a sewing shop, employing approximately 70 women, and a data processing operation, employing anywhere from 14-22 people. These are the only paid jobs in the prison, with a pay scale ranging from 15 cents to 25 cents per hour. The work areas appeared to be safe, well lit and properly ventilated. (The data processing area is, by necessity, air conditioned). The sewing factory had two toilets (one working) to accommodate the needs of 70 inmates and 2 civilian shop supervisors. I will leave any observations on the toilet issue to the Department's of Justice environmental health expert, who inspected the prison at the same time I did.

CLOTHING

Although it was raining heavily during most of my inspection, I only noticed two women with raincoats in the sewing factory and one at the Edwina Mitchell Center. (The factory is a separate building and the Center is down a hill from the main prison). Inmates housed in the Center, must go up-and-down the hill three times each day for meals. Similarly, I was shown what was purported to be the jacket provided during the winter - it was sufficiently light weight that it could almost be termed "flimsy." The Julia Tutwiler Prison should provide each inmate with appropriate clothing, so as to protect them in foul weather. An obvious exception

can be made for those women, who for various reasons, would not normally go outside during bad weather.

MENTAL HEALTH CELLS

The health services unit contains several cells, wherein mentally ill inmates would be placed. In response to an inquiry, I was told that this is also where suicidal inmates would be housed.

Therefore, I examined two of the cells to determine their degree of safety, were a suicidal person to be put in them. There are several dangerous elements in each cell. First, the bottom of the steel bunks are not a continuous piece of steel, but rather are perforated with holes (sort of swiss cheese effect). Someone could tie a sheet or garment through the holes, bend forward and kill themselves. (I recently learned of a successful suicide attempt in a state prison that employed that technique with this exact type of bunk). The prison should replace the bunks in the mental health cells with the same general style bunk, but one without perforations in it.

Screening had been placed appropriately on the inside of the window of each cell. However, the apertures in the screening are too wide and, again, someone could tie

a sheet or garment to the screening, which is securely affixed to the wall, to effect suicide. The existing window screening the mental health cells should be replaced with screening with smaller apertures, so as to permit ample natural light to come in, but to prevent tying something to it.

Each cell contains two openings for ventilation purposes. However, the openings contain small steel slats which could be pried out, sharpened and used to harm oneself or others. (Again, I have seen this exact type of slat used for such purposes in other prisons).

The ventilation openings should be protected with some kind of grill or screening, so as to permit proper air flow, but prevent the cell's occupant from gaining access to the slats.

The cells also contain the proper stainless steel combination basin/toilet combination fixture. The bunk is properly fastened to the floor. Also, each cell contains an overhead light, which has an appropriately secure fixture.

ALLEGATIONS OF IMPROPRIETY

During the course of my inspection, a number of quite credible allegations were received pertaining to sexual relationships between inmates and both male and female staff. Before I go any further, I hasten to point out that the purported number of staff is small; nobody is suggesting that a substantial percentage of staff are involved. Furthermore, it was admitted that the women voluntarily entered into these relationships, i.e., no physically forcible rape was involved. In addition, no allegations at all were received of the type of bizarre sexual practices, which were uncovered in 1992 at the women's prison in Georgia. Whether voluntary or not, such conduct by staff is reprehensible in the extreme and violates every tenant of proper correctional practice. Such conduct is also prohibited by the employee "Code of Conduct" of the Alabama Department of Corrections.

Allegedly, the inmates were rewarded for their participation in such relationships by gifts of food and cosmetics, brought in from the outside, as well as by money being placed in their accounts via other people's names.

Also, there are no allegations that administrators at the prison participated in or knowingly condoned such conduct.

If these allegations are true, there is no simple solution to the problem. Prevention of such untoward actions are a function of many steps, including continuing, intense supervision by shift supervisors and administrators. If allegations against an individual staff member are sustained after proper investigation, then swift and severe disciplinary action must be taken.

It would be extremely difficult, if not improper, to designate certain posts, e.g., housing unit supervision as "female officer only" assignments. However, there would appear to be four crucial posts involved, i.e., North Hall, South Hall, Central Hall and Death Row Dorms 5 and 9. I would suggest that at least one or two of these four posts MUST be staffed by a female officer on each shift. Thus, a female employee should become aware of any untoward or overtly suspicious conduct by a male officer. It should be noted that it has always been an assumption in the field of correctional administration that the presence of female staff affords women inmates protection against sexual harassment or abuse by male staff. Hence, this recommendation does not designate any given post in gender-specific terms, but rather applies a long-held, common sense principle of correctional administration to this situation in terms that still allow for considerable flexibility in the assignment of personnel. Also, it must be impressed upon shift supervisors that their role is to

be out and about in the institution seeing what is going on, rather than staying in their office. If needed in the office, they can be reached by walkie-talkie or some similar means. A once or twice a night swing through the prison is insufficient to provide proper supervision of subordinates.

The Julia Tutwiler Prison has a very good written policy and procedure establishing an inmate grievance system. Among other requirements, the policy calls for allegations against staff that involve criminal conduct or result in disciplinary action against an employee to be referred to the Department of Correction's central investigation unit for investigation. It is essential that such allegations be investigated by a neutral, outside entity, rather than in-house by peers of the person against whom the allegation has been made. The inmates must know that allegations of staff misconduct will be taken seriously, independently investigated, and that there will be no reprisals. Hence, the specifics of the grievance process must be scrupulously followed.

Not so incidentally, inmate-staff relationships also pose a potentially serious threat to the security of the institution. A woman in such a relationship has a figurative sword to hold over the head of an employee. Thus, the employee can be not so subtly manipulated to bring in contraband, some of which may be highly dangerous

to other staff and other inmates, or even aid in an escape attempt. Even putting aside the rights of the inmates, such relationships pose a real risk to institutional security and personal safety.

A staff culture must be developed, which encourages staff to bring legitimate suspicions about possible staff misconduct to the prison's administration. The purpose of this is not to create a network of staff snitches, but rather to safeguard the reputations of all staff and to maintain a high degree of professionalism. It must be impressed upon staff that to turn ones back on improper conduct by peers is to condone it and to place the security of the entire institution, including their own personal safety, at risk.

In short, this appears to be a problem, which requires immediate attention now, as well as continuing vigilance in the future.

VIOLENCE

Recently, there have been a number of fist fights in several dormitories. This may well be due to a recent spate of bad weather, which has kept the women confined to their dorms for inordinate periods of time during non-working or non-school hours. I found absolutely nothing to suggest weapons are used to perpetrate

inmate-on-inmate assaults. To the extent that there may have been a recent spike in the number of fights, the answer is the provision of adequate exercise and recreational alternatives to the yard, during inclement weather. The level, extent and nature of the violence that does exist is certainly not inordinate and does not pose a serious, continuing risk of harm to the safety of the general inmate population.

THE LACK OF IDLENESS

Virtually every able-bodied woman in general population is either assigned to a real job or is in school full-time. For all intents and purposes, there is no idleness at the Julia Tutwiler Prison. This is a laudable achievement and one which is increasingly rare in adult correctional institutions across the country. I went to the industries shops, the school, talked with numerous inmates and staff and found no signs indicative of make-work, sham assignments, feather bedding, or some of the other techniques sometimes employed to ensure that every inmate has some kind of assignment. The school and work activities consist of full seven hour days with genuine and appropriate activity. The prison administration should be gratified at having accomplished what many other correctional administrators in the country can only dream about, i.e., a general population that is fully and constructively occupied during the day.

THE "RAIL"

The "rail" is a perpendicular steel pole with protruding, fixed rings to which handcuffs can be attached. The rings are placed at different heights. The "rail" stands out in a yard near the officer's post located at the back gate.

People who refuse to go to their job assignment or are excessively tardy in going to work are handcuffed to the "rail." They remain there all day or until they signify a desire to go to their job. The use of the "rail" is governed by written policy and procedure and calls for inmates on the "rail" to be permitted to go to the bathroom, to get water and to be given a lunch, which is to be eaten while still on the "rail." The use of the "rail" is a rather recent practice at Julia Tutwiler Prison, the idea having been borrowed from several of Alabama's men's prisons. At Julia Tutwiler Prison, the "rail" apparently replaced the practice of hand cuffing people to the fence.

It should be noted that the use of the "rail" is, in effect summary punishment, since no disciplinary hearing is held prior to placing an individual on the "rail." Thus, there is no formal opportunity for an inmate to bring forth and potentially mitigating extenuation circumstances. There is also no medical clearance obtained prior to placement on the "rail."

The "rail" comes very close to being corporal punishment. While nobody is being beaten, people are still compelled to remain in a standing posture all day with no protection from the sun. Certainly there is an inappropriate use of restraints i.e., the handcuffs, since the generally accepted practice in the field is to never use restraints as a means of punishment, but rather as a legitimate control device for persons who pose a risk of harm to themselves or others or an escape risk.

I asked to see the bathroom that people on the "rail" would use. I was taken to the basement of a nearby building, which contained the main boilers for the institution. The corridor leading to the bathroom was completely flooded. (There had been a considerable amount of rain recently. It would also be noted that nobody had been placed on the "rail" that day).

This practice seems like a throw-back to another era in corrections and runs counter to virtually all prevailing trends of inmate discipline in the field. Furthermore, the use of the "rail" is subject to a number possible abuses. In fact, allegations were received that an inmate(s) had been denied water, while on the "rail" and that another inmate who was quite drowsy, had been placed on the "rail" for apparent tardiness. While I cannot point to any specific instance of the infliction of physical

harm as a result of being placed on the "rail," the practice is certainly humiliating and degrading.

Having people go to their work assignments is an extremely valid penological objective. However, the same result could be achieved through the prison's normal disciplinary process. In fact, a disciplinary report is written on any individual placed on the "rail." Surely there are enough legitimate alternatives already available to prison officials to compel inmates to work without having to resort to such retrogressive measures as the "rail." The use of the "rail" should be discontinued. "Refusal to work" should henceforth be handled exclusively through the prison's existing disciplinary policies and procedures.

A SAFETY NOTE

A major goal of contemporary prison design is to achieve, within reason, a "protrusion-free" environment, especially in areas like shower rooms. The reason for this is to eliminate convenient means of committing suicide. Certainly not all inmates, who commit suicide have been identified as mentally ill by staff and, thus, isolated in a mental health or suicide prevention ward.

In touring the various housing units, I noted that several of them had a combination steel shower head/faucet fixtures on which there was very little protrusion of these elements. In most dorms, however, I observed a long, curved, protruding water pipe (the actual shower heads had either never been installed or had been removed) and faucets attached to the necessary pipes, which came out a considerable distance from the wall. Since the shower areas at the Julia Tutwiler Prison are removed from the line of sight of officer posts and shower fixtures are often used by inmates as a means of attempting suicide, all dorms should be equipped with the minimally-protruding combination steel shower head/faucet fixture.

A SECURITY NOTE

While inspecting the prison, I noted a defect in perimeter security. Given the sensitive nature of this issue, the Department of Justice has informed me that its counsel will contact appropriate state officials by phone.

CANTEEN NOTE

The canteen provides a variety of comestibles and personal care items, among other things. Experience has taught me that sometimes institutions will inadvertently fail to have items appropriate for the personal care of minority groups. While the Julia Tutwiler Prison does have a good selection of personal care items for minority group

women, there was one notable exception. The prison should add a wide-tooth comb to its canteen list, since this is a necessary hair care item for many contemporary African-American women.

DISCIPLINARY SEGREGATION

Generally speaking, the policies and procedures followed by the Julia Tutwiler Prison re its disciplinary segregation practices comport with generally-accepted practice in the field. However, women in disciplinary segregation are only given two meals per day and those meals are minus dessert and condiments. The deprivation of food as a punishment violates generally-accepted practice in the field. As a rule-of-thumb, persons in disciplinary segregation should normally be given the same meals as the general population. (The withholding of dessert and condiments is acceptable practice). Women in disciplinary segregation status should be given the same three meals as the general population. The prison may withhold dessert and condiments, if it chooses to do so.

CONCLUSIONS

In a number of ways, the Julia Tutwiler prison comports favorably with generally-accepted practice in the corrections field. However, there are also some serious deficiencies and unacceptable practices, which should be remedied promptly.

The prison is adequately staffed. Officers receive a proper amount of training regarding strictly correctional issues. The lack of idleness is very positive indeed. The vocational training, education component of the prison is extremely good. The law library has an excellent collection of appropriate legal materials. Classification policies, procedures and practices comport with the generally-accepted practice in the field.

However, problems exist with the provision of adequate personal hygiene supplies. Opportunities for meaningful exercise, which is essential for the preservation of physical and mental health, are severely compromised by the lack of readily available equipment. Also, some provision needs to be made for exercise or, at a bare minimum, passive recreation outside the living units during inclement weather. The bathroom and shower in the "aged and infirm" dormitory needs to be equipped properly to address the needs of handicapped or mobility-challenged women. The whole issue of what constitutes acceptable program access for HIV-positive women needs to be examined in light of the legal requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The simple addition of privacy panels in the showers would go a long way toward increasing legitimate inmate needs for personal privacy. Several suicide prevention measures need to be taken with regard to the mental health cells and the dormitory showers throughout the facility.

Credible allegations of sexual relationships between inmates and a few staff strongly suggest the need for emphasizing the creation of a credible channel through which such grievances can be made known to administrators without the fear of reprisal and thoroughly investigated by an independent entity from outside the prison. Furthermore, the use of the "rail" should be discontinued as a disciplinary measure.

This report also discusses a number of other positives, as well as pointing out some other problems, which should be remedied. Overall, the Julia Tutwiler prison does some things extremely well and others at an acceptable level. However, there are also a variety of problems, which need to be addressed, as well as several major issues that have significant ramifications on the fundamental rights of inmates. But, for the most part, the solutions do not entail significant costs, but rather relate to policies, procedures and practices within the prison. While the prison is by no means totally deficient as regards generally-accepted penological practices, there are several very serious problems, which need to be addressed promptly and in no uncertain terms.