



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

June 9, 2013

DR&C fills only 27 of 83 new Correction Officer positions; claims need for “4 percent vacancy rate”

Westerville – Today, leaders of the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association are blasting the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation of Correction after the agency promised to hire 83 new Correction Officer positions to address prison overcrowding and high staff assault rates, but only filled 27 positions.

OCSEA activists learned recently that the three facilities that were to add the security staff *never* had any intention of filling most of the positions, claiming they needed to maintain a 4 percent employee vacancy rate. OCSEA’s research into the tables of organizations of the three facilities, uncovered the shell game. Union leaders then contacted DR&C and lawmakers demanding that the positions be filled.

“That money was allocated for those positions. If they’re not filling them, then where did the money go?” asked OCSEA President Christopher Mabe. “In the wake of major prison violence over the last year, we can’t afford *any* vacancy rate. Those positions need to be filled now,” said Mabe.

Ross Correctional Institution has failed to fill all 13 of its allocated positions; Mansfield Correctional Institution has not filled 28 of 42 positions; and Toledo Correctional Institution still has not filled 15 of the 28 positions it was allocated.

DR&C has claimed it needs to keep a 4 percent vacancy rate of Correction Officers in all institutions, even though prisons are bursting at the seams with inmates. Meanwhile, major assault rates on staff remain at a seven-year high and the number of COs has dipped dramatically. Today, there are 846 fewer Correction Officers than seven years ago, with more than 400 positions eliminated in the last two years. In March, OCSEA called on DR&C and lawmakers to add 400 Correction Officers. Instead of adding these security positions, DR&C proposed adding mostly managers and other personnel to deliver inmate programming.

“We all believe in the need for inmate programming, but you can’t sacrifice security for that,” said OCSEA Corrections Assembly President Jim Adkins.

OCSEA represents approximately 30,000 state employees who work in a wide range of security, regulatory, administrative, direct care, maintenance, customer service and other positions, including 8,500 who work in the Ohio Department of Correction and Rehabilitation. For more information, contact Sally Meckling, 614-865-2602 or 614-404-3881 (cell).