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April 22nd, 2025

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The Honorable John Harabedian
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
Legislative Office Building, 1020 N Street, Room 107
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request for Audit of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation – California Institution for Men (CIM)

Dear Chair Harabedian:

I write to respectfully request that the Joint Legislative Audit Committee approve an audit of the California Institution for Men (CIM) in Chino, a state correctional facility operated by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). The audit is needed to assess the condition of the institution's infrastructure, analyze the adequacy of funding and facility operations, and evaluate potential public safety and equity impacts resulting from long-term disrepair and recent operational disruptions.

CIM is one of California's oldest prisons, and its physical condition has severely deteriorated over time. The most recent independent facilities condition assessment was conducted in 2008 by the Office of the Inspector General and reported a Facility Condition Index (FCI) of 0.409—well below the threshold for an acceptable facility. Since then, no comprehensive assessment has been completed. Recent closures of housing units and yards, along with emergency maintenance issues such as perimeter fence failures, have raised alarms for inmate safety, staff welfare, and broader public security.

The audit request seeks to accomplish the following:

1. Determine the current condition of the California Institution for Men, including an updated Facility Condition Index (FCI), backlog of maintenance needs, and any recent inspections or evaluations completed by CDCR or independent bodies.
2. Review the allocation and use of CDCR funds at CIM from fiscal years 2020–21 through 2024–25, including general fund expenditures, maintenance budgets, and emergency repair funds.

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- Assess whether funding has been adequate to maintain minimum safety and habitability standards.
 - Determine if maintenance or facility upgrades were deferred and the rationale for those decisions.
3. Evaluate the operational impacts of deteriorating infrastructure on inmate housing, access to healthcare and rehabilitation programs, staffing levels, and the frequency of security incidents.
 4. Assess potential public safety risks resulting from facility closures, transfers of incarcerated individuals, and emergency relocations that affect local law enforcement and neighboring communities.
 5. Determine whether CIM is receiving an equitable share of state resources compared to other CDCR institutions with similar inmate populations, facility age, and risk profiles.
 6. Identify any legal, environmental, or regulatory barriers that have impeded the repair or renovation of CIM's facilities.
 7. Assess whether CDCR has developed a long-term strategy for the future of CIM, including plans for potential deactivation, repurposing, or relocation of programs and services.

Given the scale of the challenges at CIM and the potential implications for state resources, correctional policy, and public safety, I respectfully urge the Committee to direct the California State Auditor to undertake a comprehensive review. The findings will provide vital data to inform policy decisions and ensure our state's correctional institutions are operated responsibly, equitably, and safely.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Should you have any questions, please contact Minnie Santillan, my Chief of Staff, at 916.319.2053 ext 2551.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Rodriguez".

Michelle Rodriguez

Assemblymember, AD 53