



# New Hampshire State Senate **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Morse offers plan to privatize section of Corrections Dept.**

*Amendment to HB 635 offers cuts to bring spending in line with other agencies*

(Concord) Saying it was important to present his plan to create savings in the Corrections Department at a public hearing, Sen. Chuck Morse, R-Salem, offered a proposal to privatize a section of the agency today before the Finance Committee.

Addressing members of Finance, Morse (who also chairs the committee) described his privatizing amendment to HB 635 as a "tool to get to savings." He noted that in the budgets offered by Gov. Lynch and the House, some departments see a cut of as much as 15%, while Corrections would realize an increase of 5%. Morse said, "The reality is, one agency in New Hampshire can't receive more funds percentage-wise than any other department in New Hampshire. We need to find a level of general fund spending in Corrections we can live with".

In his remarks, Morse also paraphrased Governor Lynch when he stated in his budget address back in February that investing in Corrections is not an investment in New Hampshire's future. He would rather spend the money on higher education.

Morse is proposing giving Corrections Commissioner William Wrenn the ability to send up to 600 inmates currently housed in the Concord prison to a private facility. In doing so, he argued that the state could save \$6 million a year or \$1 million for every 100 prisoners.

General funding spending for Corrections totaled \$97 million in 2010 and \$100 million this year. Morse noted the spending in the governor's budget would total \$108 million and \$109 million respectively for the next two years of the biennium, while the House comes in at a lower rate of \$105 million for both 2012 and 2013. The Senate is working towards reducing the House numbers by \$5 million each of the next two years and believes that privatization is one option that should be explored. According to the Legislative Budget Office, neighboring Vermont spends \$63 per prisoner per day through privatization. In contrast, it currently costs about \$90 per prisoner per day in New Hampshire.

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