



***FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE  
NEVADA C.O. LODGE 21***

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## **02/19/2026 IFC- NDOC Overtime Public Comments**

Good morning members of the IFC. My name is Paul Lunkwitz, President of FOP Nevada Lodge 21. I come before you today to offer understanding to the overtime problem that you continue to see in the NDOC. Everyone always wants to point to staffing, non competitive pay, benefits, and the difficulty of the job in corrections. That is only part of the problem. To get right to the root of the issue everyone in this room, including myself needs to take a look in the mirror. How have **WE** failed in addressing this problem? There is a piece of this problem owned by each of you, the Director, and the Union.

The union has negotiated for and won wonderful protections, pay, and additional compensation. What we have not done is fully illustrated why this is not enough. Quite frankly, while it is amusing to watch you beat up on the Director from time to time, you are fighting someone who is not capable of fighting back. He is appointed which means he cannot vocalize where YOU and the Governor made mistakes. If he wants to keep his job, he has to take it on the chin. The Director has tried to delicately illustrate why this problem exists and what it will take to cure it. His part in this is he has been too delicate and indirect.

You all voted to gut the funding from AB 596 toward the end of the last session, not just a majority, but every single member of the Assembly, 42-0. Not only did you vote to remove the 16% increase, you voted to remove funding for provisions agreed to in the previous 2023 CBA. Officers were set to receive a 16% increase to salary and Supervisors even more than that. This was an arbitration award, something the union fought for and won fairly. We would have moved that much closer to being competitive with other local agencies. Thankfully, after some last second lobbying, most of the previous funding was returned, but only 2% of the salary increase was funded. What are you telling state employees? “Even when you win, you still lose” because the legislature can just decline to fund your raises. Now I understand you were in a difficult position, but those choices were made with open eyes. For far too long, State of Nevada Employees have been undervalued and the result in this case is overtime for NDOC.

The raises and the advancements we have made for employees through collective bargaining are the reason why NDOC is no longer 40% vacant statewide. However, we

are not at the point where all necessary positions are funded or filled. The state has been running academies, one after another, since FOP's first CBA went into effect in 2023. We should be bursting at the seams with officers by now. The other side of this is retention. We have had setbacks at certain facilities with changes from 12's to 8's, costing the state a net loss of 30 officers to the workforce.

The legislature has not funded a proper relief factor and this was clearly outlined in the \$170,000 staffing study that was completed. That outside company says the NDOC needs 750 more staff, including 600 more officers and they also said all facilities should be on 12 hour shifts. The legislature has not funded enough positions for each facility, to effectively cover all the facility needs and the inmates who are sent out to community hospitals. FOP has been working on an agreement with the LRU to trade some of the muster pay for time on shift. Our proposal increases the relief factor, in exchange for 12's at all facilities. Reach out to the LRU and the GFO to get this deal done.

High Desert State Prison has 2 officers per shift designated for hospital duty. This is our maximum security prison where we have seen close to 20 inmate deaths since the change to maximum security occurred in September of 2024. The hospital duty is constant and on average you will see around 4-8 inmates in hospitals daily. How many officers cover those inmates? Well it used to be 2 per inmate, now it's 1 and a rover officer for every 4 inmates. That ratio only holds true if they are all located at one hospital, if they are spread out throughout the many hospitals in Las Vegas, it increases the amount of officers needed. If they are a High Risk Prisoner, you also need more than one officer per inmate. Let's keep it conservative, 8 medium security inmates at one hospital= 10 officers, per shift, per day. Which means that you are 8 officers short every shift, round the clock, every day of the week that the inmates stay down there. This is just High Desert State Prison, on a daily basis you will see around 25-28 inmates at hospitals throughout the state. The insufficient relief factor at the prisons does not allow you to send officers down to the hospitals without hiring overtime. This is a deficit that you cannot absorb without copious amounts of overtime.

You cannot attain the proper relief factor without the correct amount of funded positions. No one can fill and retain enough staff in these positions without competitive pay and benefits. It is time to face the facts, PERS and PEBP are putting us in an impossible position to compete with local law enforcement agencies. 30% is what our brave men and women pay to PERS, where most local agency officers are paying less than 10%, **IF** they have to pay anything at all.

PEBP is proposing to basically double the cost of premiums over the next two years for all state employees. We are already paying more than local agencies for less benefits through UMR insurance. This is not a problem the Director can fix. What do you think happens when our officers take another pay cut in the form of a \$700-\$1000 increase to monthly insurance premiums? Rural area prisons with limited populations will be even further decimated than they are right now. Metro area prisons are going to be at a greater disadvantage to hire and retain employees with lower benefits at a higher cost.

The Union is also working on funding a K-9 program through a nonprofit. We aim to obtain donations from local casino and business owners who are interested in supporting public safety. Drug interdiction is essential in prisons and Nevada is one of only a handful of Prison systems that does not have a K-9 program in place. Drug use, overdoses, and drug related violence plague the NDOC. Even once we can get the staffing issues corrected we will need to target the drug issues inside the prisons. The only cost to the state with or proposal is moving some unfilled PCNs to the Las Vegas area in order to build the program and show its effectiveness. Once the effectiveness is established, we can expand the program to cover all Nevada Prisons.

AB 121 which forces facilities to deliver physical mail to inmates is an absolute disaster. Nevada is lagging behind other states who have already put a hard break on physical mail being delivered with drugs infused in the printer ink or on the paper itself. We met with Ohio and Michigan who have successfully reduced the means to introduce intoxicants to the prison systems. They copy the mail and deliver a copy to the inmate or they scan the mail and send it to their tablets. This decreases delays in delivery and NDOC is fully capable of instituting this practice. To be very clear, this should be for personal and legal mail. In this day and age, there is no reason to allow loopholes like this for contraband to be introduced. No rights are infringed upon and operations are actually improved.

This problem is going to take the combined efforts of the Legislature, the Union, the Governor, and the Director, to solve. This will require open and transparent dialogue, probably some hurt feelings too. You can pay for it now, or you can pay for it later. I truly hope we can correct these issues before tragedy strikes our brave men and women in Corrections.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Lunkwitz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "P".

Paul Lunkwitz

President

FOP

Nevada C.O. Lodge 21

