



Jeremy Hanson CSC MLA

Australian Capital Territory

Liberal Member for Molonglo
Shadow Minister for Health
Shadow Minister for Police
Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs
Shadow Minister for Corrections
Opposition Whip

Mr John Ley
Chair
Community Coalition on Corrections
PO Box 849
MAWSON ACT 2607

Dear Mr. Ley,

Thank you for your letter of 12 October 2008 regarding the appointment of the Official Visitor. I regret that the Canberra Liberals were unable to respond to you prior to the 2008 ACT Election and I apologise for the delay in responding to you now. This matter has been referred to me by the Leader of the Opposition as it falls within my portfolio responsibility of Corrections.

I acknowledge the concerns that you raise about the current Official Visitor as well as the manner in which he was appointed, although I am unaware of any instances where prisoners have raised doubts about Mr. Sams' suitability since he assumed the role. Notwithstanding this, I do recognize the importance of the official visitor maintaining the trust of prisoners and can appreciate the difficulty prisoners may face in raising issues of concern to someone with a law enforcement background.

In relation to your concerns about the capacity for a single official visitor to service the entire ACT Prison population upon commencement of operations at the Alexander Maconochie Centre. I will certainly seek assurances from the Government that the increased numbers of both male and female prisoners have adequate access to official visitor services.

Thank you for raising this matter with the ACT Opposition. I trust that I have been of assistance to you.

Please do not hesitate to contact me in relation to this matter or any other of concern to you and I hope to be able to meet with yourself and other representatives of the Community Coalition on Corrections in the near future

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Hanson, CSC, MLA

22 January 2009