

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 2, 2012

The Honorable Eric Holder
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

We write today to express our strong opposition to the July 26, 2012 proposal to fund the acquisition of the Thomson Correctional Center in Thomson, Illinois, by reprogramming \$165 million. This proposal was not included in the text of any bill voted on by Congress as it would essentially constitute an impermissible exercise of directed spending. Additionally, it would divert valuable resources from prisons in four other states, projects which have been authorized by Congress and are already in the process of coming online. One of these projects is in our home state of Alabama – the Aliceville Federal Correctional Institution.

We understand that the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, which oversees appropriations for prisons, has rejected the request to reprogram \$151 million from the Assets Forfeiture Fund Super Surplus and \$14 million from the Bureau of Prisons appropriation balance to acquire the Thomson facility. We agree with his decision.

The response of Congress on this issue is clear. Not only was this directed spending not included in any bill voted on by Congress, but Congress has previously denied and rescinded funding for this specific acquisition. Last year, the Appropriations Committee rejected a similar reprogramming request from the Department of Justice, and Congress subsequently rescinded the offsets contained in this proposal. The President's budget request for FY 13 proposed the rescission of all additional remaining Bureau of Prisons balances allocated for the acquisition of an existing prison, and both the House and Senate appropriations bills adopted this rescission.

It is estimated that 378 persons will be hired at the Aliceville, AL Federal Correctional Institution. The Aliceville prison facility was a welcome announcement to the entire community in a rural area that has been hit especially hard by the current economic slump. We appreciate your consideration of this issue and urge you to move forward with the authorized projects in Alabama, Mississippi, New Hampshire, and West Virginia.



Rep. Robert B. Aderholt



Rep. Terri A. Sewell



Rep. Jo Bonner



Rep. Spencer Bachus



Rep. Mo Brooks



Rep. Martha Roby



Rep. Mike D. Rogers