

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 26, 2012

The Honorable Frank Wolf
241 Cannon House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Wolf,

We are writing to reiterate Congressman Schilling's previous invitation to you to visit the Thomson Correctional Facility in Northwest Illinois. As you know well, Congressman Schilling has been working with you and others to chart a path forward that would enable the federal government to purchase the facility and operate it as a maximum security federal prison. We appreciate your willingness to continue the discussion in an attempt to find a way forward.

As you know well, this isn't a new issue – it's been around for 10 years. Neither Republicans or Democrats were able to solve it when they held both the White House and Congress. We understand, as you have noted, that it is the bipartisan position of Congress that Thomson not be used to house terrorist prisoners. As you have noted repeatedly, in 2009, President Obama attempted to order the federal government to acquire Thomson to house Guantanamo detainees.

At that time, Congressman Loeb sack immediately requested that the President provide a comprehensive security plan to ensure the safety of Iowa and Illinois residents if the detainees were to be transferred. That plan was never provided. The FY 2011 National Defense Authorization Act, marked up by the House Armed Services Committee in May 2010 and supported by Congressman Loeb sack, prohibited the transfer of Guantanamo detainees to the United States. Every subsequent National Defense Authorization Act, with our joint support as members of the Committee, has included similar bans.

We also understand that in these tight fiscal times there are members on both sides of the aisle who are likely to object to the reported \$165 million expense for the federal government purchase this facility from the State of Illinois.

However, we are committed to working together across the aisle and across the Mississippi River, as we have on a number of other issues, for the mutual benefit of our shared regional economy, as well as helping address the issues of over-capacity and crowding in our federal maximum security prison system.

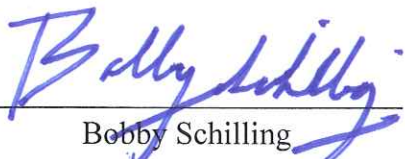
We would like to invite you to visit Thomson prison to see for yourself the potential benefit it

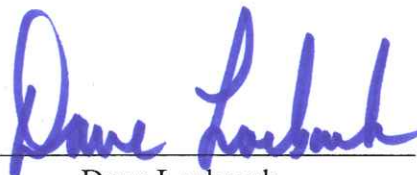
offers the prison system as well as the regional economy. Specifically, it is estimated that about \$19 million in labor income and \$61 million in business sales will occur in the local community once the prison is open. Therefore, total annual local impact, both direct and indirect, is expected to be at least \$202 million a year. This is not to mention the more than 1,100 jobs the operation of the facility would create.

Further, the operation of this facility would translate into as much as \$20.3 million in direct federal income tax revenue each year. In addition, \$6.2 million in direct state income tax revenue and at least \$3.8 million in sales tax revenue would be generated from the opening of this facility.

We appreciate your consideration of our request. While we understand the challenges this project faces, the benefits are too great, both to the taxpayer and to our region, for us to abandon this effort.

Sincerely,


Bobby Schilling
Member of Congress


Dave Loeb sack
Member of Congress