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Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

To: Juvenile and Adult Facility Residents and Family Members

From: Jeff Zmuda, Secretary

Date: April 28, 2021

Re: Coronavirus and KDOC updates

National Reentry Week is April 26-30 and serves as a great way to round out April's Second Chance Month. Nearly 6,000 KDOC residents reenter our communities each year, and the vast majority are released to KDOC supervision for a period of time. This week we celebrate our KDOC reentry teams and their critical role in achieving our mission and vision.

Our reentry staff have many duties, including release and discharge planning. This includes connecting to housing, behavioral health care, family services, survival items, transportation, community identification and employment. Staff help prepare residents to find a sustained livable wage employment – a cornerstone of success - and work with parole staff after the resident's release to provide support to sustain employment. They nurture partnerships to support this work, coordinating their efforts with parole and others to ensure a smooth transition. They also oversee and deliver an array of cognitive behavioral interventions, including CBI programs and the use of core correctional practices. These programs are designed to teach our residents and returning individuals the thought and action skills that decrease antisocial thinking and destructive behavior to increase success. Reentry staff also work closely with every area of operation in the KDOC, forging strong relationships to support the success of residents and individuals under supervision in the communities. We are grateful to these staff for their dedication and expertise and we thank all of them for their efforts.

Earlier this week, Gov. Kelly signed into law HB2007. Among the many provisions in this budget bill are renovation/ expansion projects at our Lansing and Winfield correctional facilities. Some of you may recall that these projects received approval last year but put on hold last summer to manage the state's budget situation. KDOC and the Governor again included the projects in the budget request to the 2021 Legislature and both projects were included in HB2007. The legislature is adjourned until May 3, with various legislative committees meeting this week to work through budget and funding topics among other issues before the legislature this year. When the full legislature returns, they will make a decision on this topic along with others and we will update everyone when a final decision is reached.

And finally, our COVID-19 positive numbers remain low all across KDOC, and vaccination numbers continue to tick upwards. Please continue to follow all pandemic mitigation procedures. We are all looking forward to the day we can truly get back to normal – whatever our new normal will be – but we must all remain patient. We are headed in a good direction.