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*House of Representatives*  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
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August 7, 2006

David B. Farney, Esquire  
Assistant Counsel  
PA Department of Corrections  
Office of Chief Counsel  
55 Utlely Drive  
Camp Hill, PA 17011

Dear Attorney Farney:

I am writing regarding the recent proposed amendments to the County Correctional Institutions Regulations. Specifically, I have concerns about proposed section 95.237 relating to qualifications for participants in prison ministries. The proposal places an undue burden on prison ministries and should be changed or eliminated.

This proposed regulation states that individuals seeking to provide religious guidance to inmates must have "qualifications associated with clinical pastoral education or equivalent training and endorsement by the appropriate religious certifying body." I question the scope of this proposal as well as its need.

Myrl Musselman, Chaplain at Bedford County Jail, and Peggy Leader, Treatment Specialist at Bedford County Jail, have both written to you expressing their concerns. I support their position that this proposal unnecessary restricts the persons who can engage in the prison ministry program.

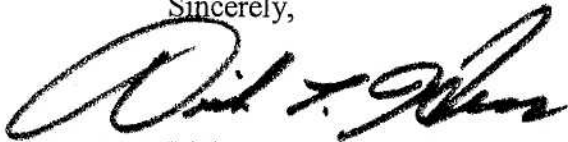
The prison ministry program is reliant on dedicated volunteers who may not have the qualifications required by the proposed regulation. Further, I am unaware of any penal interests that would require imposition of these new qualifications. The burdens created by this proposed regulation, especially on volunteers comply with these new qualifications, could mean the end of prison ministries as we know them.

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I urge you to reconsider the proposed regulation so that the good work of the prison ministry in Bedford County, and elsewhere in Pennsylvania, can continue unhindered. I would be pleased to meet with you or your staff, along with Mr. Musselman and Ms. Leader, to discuss the issue further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dick L. Hess". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dick" being the most prominent.

Dick L. Hess  
State Representative  
78<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

DLH:rk

cc: Rep. Dennis O'Brien, Chair, House Judiciary Committee  
Bedford County Commissioners  
District Attorney William J. Higgins, Jr.  
I. Myrl Musselman, Chaplain, Bedford County Jail  
Peggy V. Leader, Treatment Specialist, Bedford County Jail