



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

STATE SENATE

January 3, 2023

The Honorable Andy Beshear
Governor of Kentucky
700 Capital Avenue, Suite 100
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dear Governor Beshear:

On December 2, northern Kentucky law enforcement officials received a memo from Juvenile Justice Commissioner Vicki Reed informing the Campbell County Regional Juvenile Detention Center that all female and male detainees would now be transported by local law enforcement two and a half hours away to the Boyd County Regional Juvenile Detention Center.

When northern Kentucky counties closed their juvenile detention facilities 20 years ago, they did it with the agreement the state would operate a regional juvenile detention facility in northern Kentucky. I remember this well as the Boone County Juvenile Detention Center administrator in part of those negotiations.

The memo from Commissioner Reed was disappointing, and the strategy is unworkable. Of juveniles detained in northern Kentucky, 90 percent are male. Your administration's effort to address problems within the juvenile justice system may be well-intended but is short-sighted.

As northern Kentucky's most senior state senator, I object to the notion these juveniles will virtually be cut off from their families, which in many instances is their one conduit of stability.

In addition, the courts and attorneys will not have adequate access and local law enforcement, already strained by staffing shortages, will spend precious hours and resources coordinating transportation of northern Kentucky's largest share of the detainee population. At a time with violent juvenile crime is on the rise, we must have a detention center in our community. It is imperative the juvenile justice system works with parents, law enforcement and courts, not against them.

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Prior to my career in the Kentucky state Senate, I worked many years in the corrections field on the county, state, and federal levels. This included detainees in juvenile facilities. I am confident the security concerns, which were identified as a reason for these changes, can still be resolved without effectively closing our juvenile detention facility in northern Kentucky.

Northern Kentucky is one of the biggest population centers in the state. Your administration and the state have an obligation to uphold the agreement made 20 years ago.

I look forward to speaking with you or your representatives regarding this emergency situation. Thank you for your leadership during these difficult times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Schickel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "J".

Senator John Schickel
Senate District 11

JS/kl

cc: Senate Leadership
Northern Kentucky Law Enforcement
Northern Kentucky County Attorneys