

AFGE Local 4070 Condemns Dangerous Staffing Cuts at Thomson Federal Prison

THOMSON, IL, UNITED STATES, February 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 4070 strongly opposes the Bureau of Prisons' recent decision to eliminate recruitment incentives and slash retention bonuses for medical and psychology staff at Thomson Federal Prison, a facility already grappling with 134 vacant positions.



"These reckless cuts directly threaten the safety of our officers, inmates, and the surrounding community," said Jon Zumkehr, President of AFGE Local 4070. "It's unconscionable that while the former BOP Director acknowledges our officers earn less than Walmart employees, the Bureau chooses to further reduce compensation for our dedicated staff."

The announced 50% reduction in retention bonuses for medical and psychology staff has already prompted several healthcare workers to consider leaving their positions. This exodus would force Thomson to outsource inmate medical care to local facilities, dramatically increasing costs and straining community resources.

AFGE Local 4070 has actively partnered with prison management to host multiple job fairs and recruitment initiatives. These efforts to staff this hard-to-fill facility in a remote location are now severely undermined by these short-sighted cuts.

"This is not strategic cost-saving – this is a blind slash of essential funding that will cost taxpayers more in the long run," continued Jon Zumkehr. "The overtime costs alone to cover vacant positions, combined with increased recruitment expenses, will far exceed any immediate savings."

AFGE Local 4070 calls on Congress to:

Fully fund the Federal Bureau of Prisons
Pass a comprehensive budget before the March 14, 2025 shutdown deadline
Restore recruitment incentives and retention bonuses at Thomson
Address the critical staffing shortage affecting officer and inmate safety

The union stands ready to work with Congress and BOP leadership to find sustainable solutions that ensure proper staffing and maintain the safety and security of Thomson Federal Prison.

JON ZUMKEHR

AFGE 4070

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