

COMMITTEE MINUTES for GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT

Date: February 23, 2010

Place: Legislative Dining Room

Convened: 2/23/2010
10:15 AM

Recessed:

Reconvened:

Adjourned: 2/23/2010
11:30 AM

Present: Senators Olive-CH, Courtney-VC, Sodders
Representatives Lensing-CH, Watts-RM, Baudler, Berry, Olson, S., Sorenson, Swaim,
Whitead

Absent: None

Excused: Senators Ward-RM, Wieck
Representative Ford-VC

Representative Lensing called the meeting to order at 10:15 am. Roll call was taken. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed.

Representative Lensing introduced Mr. Roger Baysden, Director of Prison Industries. Mr. Baysden gave an overview of Iowa Prison Industries. Much of the information he presented was in their Annual Report, 2008-2009 which was distributed to the committee.

Iowa Prison Industries (IPI) is the manufacturing division of the Department of Corrections adult system. It focuses upon skill development by hands-on teaching to inmates who apply to the program. It is important to the successful re-entry of an offender by providing a foundation of work ethic and interpersonal skill development. The program changes lives by mirroring mainstream industry thereby ensuring the offender's chances of a successful return to society upon their release. Inmates punch time clocks and are paid an hourly stipend (depending on the job title and time in grade).

IPI has a diverse advisory board. This board meets to approve new business ventures, approve IPI's overall operations plan, it's farm and private sector operations, and represent public and private business and labor.

IPI is a supplier of goods and services to State and local government agencies, public educational systems and not-for-profit organizations that receive tax dollars. It is self-supporting through its revenues from sales and competitive prices. For example, in FY 2000 there were 9 customers who were volunteer purchasers, and in 2009 that number had increased to 20.

Mr. Baysden provided examples of the success of this program. These examples included reupholstering and recycling of office material and a brochure of novelties and gifts produced by IPI inmate employees was provided. Also shown was an example of dolls made to give away as charitable donations. Mr. Baysden also spoke about the farm program and stated that the loss of land was making it difficult to keep this operation successful.

Mr. Baysden introduced former State Representative Michael Peters, Chair of IPI's Advisory Board, to speak about his experience with IPI. Mr. Peters encouraged members of the Oversight Committee to see firsthand how the commissary in Newton operates.

Questions were taken from the Committee.

Representative Baudler moved to arise and the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Representative Vicki S. Lensing

Patricia Van Cleave, Committee Secretary