



PRESS RELEASE

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MDOC EVALUATING MEDICAL SERVICES CONTRACT

Jackson—The Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) is currently evaluating the agency's options for providing medical care services for state inmates. This review follows the unofficial word from the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) that it plans to terminate the medical service contract it has with MDOC on June 30, 2002.

“We have received no official written notification from UMMC that they are terminating the medical services contract, but have heard from medical staff that they have been told they will lose their jobs the first of July,” said Commissioner Robert L. Johnson. “It is our understanding that UMMC is terminating the contract based on language that is in our FY 2003 appropriation bill.”

Senate Bill 3163, which is the funding bill for MDOC, states in Section Three, line 54, that:

“However, none of the funds allocated to Medical Services under this section shall be expended after July 31, 2002, unless based upon a competitive bid process to provide medical care and pharmaceuticals to state inmates through a contractual arrangement with not less than a ten percent (10%) savings below the Department of Corrections Fiscal Year 2002 costs for providing health care to state inmates. Not later than June 15, 2002, the Department of Corrections shall inform the Chairmen of the House Penitentiary Committee, the Senate Corrections Committee, and two members from the Appropriations Committees of the House of Representatives and Senate to be selected by the Chairmen of the Appropriations Committees of each respective house of the feasible options to provide health care to state inmates.”

(more)

“The Mississippi Department of Corrections did not recommend the inclusion of any of this language in our appropriations bill,” said Commissioner Johnson. “We were not included in any discussions with Legislative conferees on our appropriations bill. When we discovered this language had been included, we asked that it be amended to allow funding to continue through the remainder of this calendar year and provide adequate time for competitive bids to be received.”

The total medical service budget for FY 2002 as appropriated by the Legislature in 2001 is \$22,741,257. In addition, the Legislature approved in the session that just ended a deficit funding for medical services in the amount of \$7,590,798.

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