

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1317

April 18, 2016

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

I was pleased to learn that the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice's (IDJJ) is open to bringing the Illinois Youth Center in Kewanee up to the standards and national best practices in place across the country, pending the recommendation of this Commission. The Illinois Youth Center in Kewanee is the only juvenile justice center in Illinois designated as a special treatment facility and it is a major economic driver in the community.

The jobs of nearly 200 hardworking employees are at risk should the Commission vote to close the Kewanee center. The closure of this facility would undoubtedly be a severe economic blow to the city and it is important that we explore options that benefit both the community and the youth at this facility.

To align with the national best practices and work towards improving community safety, I recommend the Illinois Youth Center in Kewanee remain open and undergo the changes necessary to bring it up to the suggested standards. The special treatment facilities already in place in Kewanee make it a unique and valuable asset to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, as well as the youth and families who benefit from these services.

The nearly 200 hardworking men and women of the Kewanee Center deserve our support so we must do everything we can to protect their jobs, ensure that the children treated receive the highest quality care possible and strengthen our community.

Sincerely,



Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress