



"A Message from the Inspector General: Report on the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Efforts to Maintain and Construct Institutions," May 2023

Hello, I'm Michael Horowitz, Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Today, my office released a report on the Federal Bureau of Prisons', or BOP's, efforts to maintain and construct correctional institutions. The condition of prison infrastructure is critically important to BOP's operation of safe and secure facilities.

However, as detailed in today's report, the BOP's facilities are aging and deteriorating: all 123 of the BOP's institutions require maintenance, and three prisons are in such disrepair that they are fully or partially closed. Indeed, we found that the BOP has a growing list of almost \$2 billion in unfunded, critical repairs.

We determined the BOP's efforts to address these issues were negatively impacted by two major factors: first, a mismatch between requested and needed funding, and second, the absence of a well-defined strategy.

Specifically, we found that BOP budget requests have been far below its own estimates of the resources it needs, and therefore it hasn't received adequate funding to address its infrastructure challenges. For example, in fiscal year 2022, despite the BOP's estimate that it had a nearly \$2 billion backlog of maintenance projects, its budget request was less than \$200 million for this work, and Congress appropriated \$59 million.

In addition, we found that the BOP doesn't have a well-defined, comprehensive strategy to address its infrastructure needs. Without such a strategy, the BOP is unable to prioritize projects, or effectively communicate its needs to relevant decision makers, including DOJ leadership, the Office of Management and Budget, and Congress.

This inability to timely address its infrastructure needs can result in an ever-worsening problem, thereby increasing future costs or, even more significantly, resulting in the BOP shutting down an institution. That's why it's critical for the BOP to develop a long-term infrastructure strategy to address this important challenge.

To read our report and our two recommendations, please visit our website oig.justice.gov, or go to oversight.gov.

Thank you for joining me today.

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