GLENN **GROTHMAN**
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Press Releases

GROTHMAN'S BILL TO HELP REOPENING OF ALCATRAZ

Washington, May 14, 2025

Congressman Glenn Grothman (R-WI) has reintroduced the *BOP Direct-Hire Authority Act*, legislation which will alleviate staffing shortages at Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facilities across the country by cutting bureaucratic red tape to enhance the safety and security of BOP personnel.

President Donald Trump's recent call to reopen Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary to house America's most violent criminals highlights the growing national concern that our prison system is overwhelmed and under-resourced. This legislation received support from five cosponsors, as well as the Council of Prison Locals C-33 (CPL-33), the largest union for BOP employees nationwide.

"One of the main hurdles in President Trump's effort to reopen Alcatraz will be the ability to quickly hire Correctional Officers," **said Grothman.** *"That is why Congress needs to quickly pass this legislation to help the federal prison system which has been understaffed and overwhelmed for years.*

"We have labor shortages everywhere in this country, but when it comes to hiring correctional officers, it is unnecessarily multiplied by the federal bureaucracy. I have toured the Federal Correctional Institution in Oxford, Wisconsin, which is part of the Bureau of Prisons, and I often receive feedback from many of its employees. Unfortunately, FCI Oxford is yet another example of the staffing crisis that has devastated BOP facilities and personnel across the country."

"For far too long, our Bureau of Prisons facilities have faced dangerous staffing shortages that threaten the safety of correctional officers, staff, and inmates alike. As the Representative of FCI Ray Brook, I am proud to support the BOP Direct-Hire Authority Act, a critical step toward reversing this crisis and restoring safe staffing levels across the Bureau of Prisons," **said Chairwoman Stefanik.** *"This bill empowers BOP facilities to move swiftly to fill open positions and will significantly improve workforce morale, retention, and overall institutional safety. I thank Congressman Grothman for his leadership on this important issue, and I will continue to advocate for solutions that prioritize the safety of our correctional personnel and communities."*

"The current staffing levels in BOP institutions have reached dangerously low levels, posing significant risks to both staff and inmates. Insufficient staffing within the Bureau of Prisons has far-reaching consequences, affecting prison operations, inmate management, and overall institutional functioning. In fact, in FY2023, there were over 7,700 vacancies for Correctional Officers within the BOP," **said Brandy Moore White, National President of CPL-33.** *"We firmly believe that the enactment of the "BOP Direct-Hire Authority Act" into law will play a vital role in ensuring the safety and security of our prison facilities."*

Background Information

For many years, staffing ratios at numerous Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facilities have fallen below safe or sustainable levels, posing increased risks to the safety and well-being of both BOP personnel and inmates. The lack of manpower also affects personnel morale and retention. Shane Fausey, former National President of the Council of Prison Locals, highlighted this concern during his testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee in 2022 by reporting that **staffing at BOP has fallen from 43,369 employees in January of 2016 to 35,000 employees in September of 2022**.

One of the biggest issues that affects the BOP's ability to hire personnel in a timely manner are requirements by the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Currently, applicants to BOP must be processed through OPM before the applications are made available to individual BOP facilities for potential hire. This cumbersome process takes a minimum of 105 days, but often results in a lag of six months from the time a position is posted until it is filled.

A straightforward and simple solution to tackle this issue is to provide individual BOP facilities with direct-hire authority for all vacant positions throughout the agency, at least until staffing ratios increase to acceptable levels. This streamlined approach aims to expedite the hiring process, ensuring that

critical positions are filled promptly and efficiently.

The *BOP Direct-Hire Authority Act* would provide direct-hire authority for all BOP facilities until each facility reaches a level of 96 percent staffed and is supported by the Council of Prison Locals C-33 (CPL33), the largest union for BOP employees nationwide.

Grothman is joined by Representatives Elise Stefanik (R-NY), Pete Stauber (R-MN), Mike Rogers (R-AL), Juan Ciscomani (R-AZ), and Beth Van Duyne (R-TX).

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U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-Glenbeulah) is serving his fifth term representing Wisconsin's 6th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

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