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11/15/22

Editor:

As state lawmakers, we're very concerned with the alarming number of vacancies in our commonwealth's prison system, and the number is only growing.

The latest numbers from the Department of Corrections reveal there are 901 vacancies for corrections officers, positions that keep our prisons safe and secure. To give readers an idea of how dire this situation is, two years ago there were less than 100 openings. Our brave corrections officers deserve better and need our help. Not only are they severely outnumbered, but they're being forced to work multiple shifts, including on days they're supposed to be off. It's leading to exhaustion and extreme stress that also impacts their lives at home.

The time has come for the Wolf administration and General Assembly to come together and fix this problem. Neighboring state prison systems are poaching Pennsylvania residents for jobs with better wages, benefits and signing bonuses. Meanwhile, applications with the DOC can languish for months. Pennsylvania needs to start being competitive if we want to keep our state prisons operating safely.

If we do nothing, we risk the security of our state prisons and the lives and well-being of our brave corrections officers.

Pam Snyder

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pam Snyder".

State Representative  
50<sup>th</sup> Legislative District