



## DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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### **DOC invites tribal liaisons to tour penitentiary**

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC) invited tribal liaisons to tour the South Dakota State Penitentiary and the Jameson Annex to the Penitentiary in Sioux Falls January 21-22 in order to help the liaisons gain a better understanding of the prison system.

"Gov. Mike Rounds has emphasized improving relations with the tribes and enhancing cultural activities for the inmate population," said state corrections secretary Tim Reisch. "The establishment of the tribal liaisons has already proven to be a valuable resource for our staff and the inmates. We believe it will help the tribes identify resources to assist inmates upon release."

Three liaisons attended including: Clyde Red Shirt, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation; Mattie High Pipe, Rosebud Indian Reservation; and Altwin Grass Rope, Lower Brule Indian Reservation.

"Rehabilitation is important to make the inmates better citizens when they get out. Any effort to do this is appreciated," said Red Shirt. "It's time that the tribes are aware of problems of inmates in prisons and take an interest in assisting them."

Red Shirt spoke at a Native American Spiritual Conference at the Penitentiary and to staff at a pre-service training session. Red Shirt also took 50 inmate-made knit stocking caps back to the Pine Ridge area to distribute to those who needed them.

The DOC has established liaisons with six of the state's tribes in an effort to improve relations between the state and the tribes. Efforts are underway to establish relationships with the remaining tribes in the state.

The DOC recently added a Lakota language class and culturally centered treatment classes at the State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls. The time allowed for powwows has been increased and additional sweat lodge ceremonies have been approved.

The DOC is planning another meeting with the tribal liaisons later this spring.