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Gov. Daugaard Selects New Corrections Secretary

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard announced today that Denny Kaemingk of Mitchell, who is Chairman of the South Dakota Board of Pardons and Paroles, has been selected as Secretary of the Department of Corrections.

Kaemingk succeeds Tim Reisch and will begin managing the state prison system on May 9. Gov. Daugaard earlier named Reisch as State Adjutant General and Secretary of the Military.

Kaemingk has an extensive history in criminal justice. He has served for the past nine years on the Parole Board, including four as chairman. His law enforcement career began in 1976 as a patrolman in the Mitchell Police Department. He later advanced to drug detective, special investigator for the Attorney General's Office, Captain of Detectives and Communications/911 Supervisor before finally retiring from the police force in 2000.

"I cannot think of anyone more qualified than Denny to be Corrections Secretary," Gov. Daugaard said. "He has literally learned the ins and outs of the criminal justice system from the ground up, beginning with arrests and convictions, and ending with release from prison on parole. His no-nonsense practical experience makes him the perfect pick to oversee the state prison system."

Kaemingk, whose hometown is Aurora Center, looks forward to the challenge of the new position. He said his extensive experience as a member of the Board of Pardons and Paroles will prove extremely helpful.

"These last few years have been exciting in exploring new programs to prepare inmates for release on parole. New assessment tools help determine who is an acceptable risk for early release and who should simply be required to serve their entire sentences," Kaemingk said.

"The reduction in the number of parolees returning to prison through violations using evidence-based practices and the increased use of sanctions by Parole Officers is encouraging," Kaemingk said. "It's my hope that this will be successful in the long run and the recidivism rate will continue declining."

Kaemingk, who was appointed to the Board of Pardons and Paroles by the Attorney General, will resign from that position later this month.

*Kaemingk (**KAY**'-mink)