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Date: 11/10/2014 12:50:18 PM

Subject: FW: Governor Nikki Haley Announces New Department of Corrections Director

Attachments: [Stirling SCDC 9-5-2013.jpg](#)

below

From: SC Gov News

Sent: Monday, November 10, 2014 9:06 AM

To: Mayer, Doug; Peters, Hal

Subject: Governor Nikki Haley Announces New Department of Corrections Director



NIKKI R. HALEY

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

September 3, 2013

For immediate release

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Governor Nikki Haley Announces New Department of Corrections Director

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Governor Nikki Haley today named Bryan P. Stirling as the acting director of the South Carolina Department of Corrections (SCDC), effective October 1, 2013. Current director, William R. Byars Jr. announced his retirement in August of 2013 after having served as the head of the SCDC for three years. Stirling has been Governor Haley's Chief of Staff since October of 2012 and served as South Carolina's Deputy Attorney General from 2006 to 2012.

"Over the past three years our prison population has decreased and the recidivism rate is now at a 20 year low – proving that our reforms are working," said Gov. Nikki Haley. "When it came time to think of someone for the Department of Corrections, I wanted someone I knew I could work well with, someone that knows how I feel about our prison system, and someone that I trusted. That person is Bryan Stirling and I am both proud and confident in his ability to continue the great work Judge Byars has established."

Prior to joining Governor Haley's staff, Stirling worked as South Carolina's Deputy Attorney General from 2006 to 2012. He also worked for two private law firms, McAngus Goudelock and Courie, LLC, and Tompkins and McMaster, LLC, before entering state government. Stirling received his Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1996 after earning a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of South Carolina in 1991.

As Governor Haley's Chief of Staff, Stirling oversaw management of the governor's cabinet and the Office of Executive Policy and Programs. During his time as Deputy Attorney General, he served as a direct advisor to two Attorneys General and worked with the legislature on a wide range of criminal justice and budget

issues. Stirling has been active in the criminal justice system since 1996 and has prosecuted over 40 criminal domestic violence cases since 2004.

"The people of South Carolina can be confident that the reforms and strong foundation that Judge Byars has established at the Department of Corrections will continue and be built upon," said Bryan Stirling. "Having spent a great portion of my career working with law enforcement, I understand just how important our prison system is to the health of our state and I look forward to working to make it even more efficient, effective, and safe."

SCDC houses just under 22,000 inmates and employs some 5,700 security and non-security personnel who work at 26 prisons around the state and at various facilities based in Columbia. During Byars' administration, SCDC saw the inmate population decrease and recidivism dropped to a 20-year low of 27.5%.

"Governor Haley said that she wanted to have someone follow me who could build on the things we have been able to accomplish since I have been here, and I think she has made an excellent selection in Bryan Stirling," said Byars. "I will begin immediately to work with him on an orderly transition into his new duties. My deepest thanks go to Governor Haley for the support she has given us in making much needed improvements to the infrastructure, safety, and pay of our security force here at SCDC."

"I approve of the governor's appointment," said Representative Mike Pitts. "I've worked closely on law enforcement issues with Bryan while he was at the Attorney General's office and during his time at the governor's office."

"Bryan is an excellent choice to lead the DOC," said Senator Mike Fair. "His experience at the Attorney General's Office and time spent working with law enforcement will be a tremendous asset for the department. Bryan's reputation is impeccable and he has consistently served with distinction."

"As Deputy Attorney General, I frequently relied on Bryan Stirling's expertise and counsel," said Attorney General Alan Wilson. "He not only gained my utmost trust, but his leadership skills earned him the respect of his colleagues in the Attorney General's Office. I know Bryan will display that same leadership and ability as he moves on to the next phase of his career."

Stirling will be transitioning over the next several weeks and officially begin his duties as director beginning October 1, 2013.

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