Testimony from John Hanner, President, Aramark Correctional Services

Correctional Institution Inspection Committee Meeting

July 30, 2014

Thank you Chairperson Smith and members of the Committee for the opportunity to discuss Aramark’s partnership with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction to provide food service at 26 facilities statewide.

I’d like to start by telling you a little bit about our company.

Aramark is a global leader in food, facilities management and uniforms with 270,000 employees in 22 countries.

Here in Ohio, we employ 7,000 people with an annual payroll of 135 million dollars. We purchase over 240 million dollars in goods and services from local Ohio companies.

We are the oldest and largest provider to the corrections industry in the nation with almost 40 years experience, serving 380 million meals each year at over 500 correctional facilities.

When we delivered our proposal to the State last year, we committed to saving the taxpayers 14 million dollars annually.

I am pleased to report that in the last 9 months alone, this outsourcing effort has already saved the DRC and the taxpayers of Ohio 13.3 million dollars, well ahead of projections.

And we are delivering these savings through efficiencies gained with Aramark’s food production processes, while paying a competitive market wage.

Through June, we have served approximately 30 million meals over 26,000 meal periods across 26 facilities and we have not missed one meal.

And while we fully acknowledge occasional delays and menu substitutions, they have occurred less than 1 percent of the time and have been isolated to a few facilities.

Serving safe, nutritious food is Aramark’s top priority. We have served billions of meals to millions of offenders at hundreds of correctional facilities around the country and never encountered food safety incident reports like those alleged earlier this month.

Every facility inspected by the Health Department since Aramark took over food service has received a passing grade. In addition, the American Correctional Association has accredited 6 new facilities including food service operations. We are proud of our partnership with the DRC to make this happen.

As further evidence of our commitment to food safety, Aramark has engaged a third party auditor, at our expense, to conduct a thorough inspection of food service operations at all 26 facilities.
Our partnership with the DRC is strong. We have been making significant progress in addressing any operational and staffing challenges that both Aramark and the DRC anticipated during a transition of this size and scale.

Despite allegations that Aramark has failed to staff appropriately, currently across all locations in aggregate, staffing levels exceed 100 percent.

After decades in the corrections business, we fully understand the paramount importance of safety and security. That's why we share the DRC's zero tolerance for inappropriate conduct. We continue to increase our training efforts around employee conduct and are pleased to report that the number of stop orders issued on a monthly basis is trending down.

In addition, we are in the process of launching our IN2WORK vocational training program that provides offenders with hands-on training and certification that prepares them for jobs in the culinary and retail management industries after they are released. This program, which we have in place at 75 facilities across the country, helps to reduce repeat offenses, increasing quality of life for offenders. The recidivism rate of IN2WORK graduates is less than 8 percent compared to a typical rate of 37 percent.

In summary, we believe in full accountability and accept responsibility for our performance – both where we are on target and where we need to improve. We continue to work collaboratively with Director Mohr and the DRC staff to address and resolve any remaining challenges.

Speaking on behalf of more than 400 dedicated employees across 26 DRC facilities, we are committed to the success of this partnership and are proud to serve the DRC, the State of Ohio and its taxpayers. We will continue to make this work. You have my personal commitment and you have Aramark’s commitment.

I thank the DRC and the Committee for working closely with Aramark to ensure the continued success of this partnership.

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