



JEAN PETERS BAKER

JACKSON COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

November 27, 2017

Jackson County Executive
Frank White Jr.
415 East 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

Dear County Executive Frank White:

I am writing to inform you that I am declining your invitation to serve on a new task force regarding the Jackson County Detention Center. The recent brutal assault of a corrections officer has prompted me to re-evaluate my participation.

It's clear that action is required immediately. Community input may be helpful in guiding your staff regarding impacts related to long-term solutions. But action is required now to fix the immediate problems at the jail. The jail experts who advised the county Legislature were very clear earlier this year that the overcrowded conditions and poor staffing were a crisis that needed to be addressed immediately. They recommended closing a part of the jail until those conditions could be remedied. Spending more time to further study the overcrowded and unsafe conditions at the detention center is simply inappropriate.

I would encourage you to talk to and work closely with the Legislature in taking immediate steps and laying the groundwork for future improvements, including the possibility of a new jail.

My office will continue to evaluate policies regarding bonds in this county. As you should know, the office is continually faced with making difficult recommendations to judges on bond amounts, due to the limited capacity at the jail. My office stands ready and available to provide any information or assist your management of the Jackson County Detention Center and plan long-term improvements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean Peters Baker".

Jean Peters Baker
Prosecutor for Jackson County

