

ACLU: Advocates speak out against demolition of Felmers O. Chaney Correctional Center

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MILWAUKEE —The ACLU of Wisconsin, several other local advocacy groups, and State Senator Lena Taylor gathered outside of the Felmers O. Chaney Correctional Center today to speak out against the proposed demolition of the facility as part of the plan to close Lincoln Hills.

At the press conference organized by the Felmers O. Chaney Advisory Board, representatives voiced their collective opposition to the Department of Corrections' plan to shut down the Chaney Center and replace it with a Type 1 juvenile prison, which would hold youth after the closure of Lincoln Hills.

The Chaney Center currently operates as a minimum-security adult facility that provides work release programs and other vital transitional services to incarcerated individuals nearing the end of their prison sentences and preparing to reenter the community.

While the coalition favors closing Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake, they do not support shutting down the Chaney Center as part of that plan.

"We believe that Milwaukeeans should not have to choose between bringing our incarcerated youth closer to home and helping our Milwaukee men reintegrate into their communities," said Abby Kanyer, community engagement manager of the ACLU of Wisconsin said at the press conference. "Our criminal legal system fractures, separates and breaks up Milwaukee families. In bringing the youth at Lincoln Hills closer to home while preserving a site for crucial reentry services, we are bringing families closer together."

The Chaney Center provides Milwaukee-area men with various pre-release services that give them the skills and support they need to rejoin their communities successfully. These services include substance abuse and mental health treatment, employment and housing support, fatherhood programming, public speaking and volunteering opportunities, and a supportive community.

A recording of the press conference is available here: <https://fb.watch/bC5nNR7uu5/>

A copy of the press release is available here: <https://www.aclu-wi.org/en/-/press-releases/advocates-speak-out-against-demolition-felmers-o-chaney-correctional-center>