

July 18, 2013

WASHINGTON D.C. -- U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) and U.S. Representative Cheri Bustos (IL-17) have announced that the Senate Appropriations Committee today approved funding for the activation of the Thomson correctional facility in Thomson, Illinois at the level that was requested by President Obama in his fiscal year 2014 budget proposal which was delivered to Congress last April. Durbin and Bustos plan to meet with officials from the Department of Justice's Bureau of Prisons soon to discuss the activation of Thomson.

"Activating Thomson prison to help relieve overcrowding in our prison system is a priority for President Obama, it's a priority for the Senate and it is a priority for the Illinois delegation," said Durbin. "We still have a long way to go to bring this funding to Illinois, but we are making progress every day. Congresswoman Bustos and I will continue working closely to make certain that funding is made available as soon as possible to create over 1,100 jobs and bring millions of dollars in new economic activity to Illinois."

"I'm thrilled that we are yet another step closer to the opening of Thomson prison," said Bustos. "Thomson prison would not only alleviate overcrowding in our prison system, but its opening will be an economic boon for our region of Illinois and I'm pleased that both the President and the U.S. Senate have made this a priority. I look forward to continuing to work with Senator Durbin and the Bureau of Prisons to continue our progress in keeping this job-creating facility on track to open."

The Senate's FY2014 Commerce, Justice, Science and related agencies appropriations bill includes \$166.3 million to begin the activation of Thomson prison and two other prisons, acquire 1,000 private contract beds and to expand a program to reduce recidivism rates. This amount would likely cover the entire cost of upgrades and renovations to the facility.

The full activation of Thomson prison is expected to take two years at a cost of \$25 million in fiscal year 2014 for upgrades and renovations and \$168 million in fiscal year 2015 for equipment and staffing. Today's legislation includes language would require the Bureau of Prisons to notify Congress if they are not able to adhere to that activation schedule.

Illinois members will meet with Bureau of Prisons soon to discuss progress.