

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Truth in Prison Staff and Administrative Reporting Act (TIPS & Administrative Reporting Act)

Overview

The Truth in Prison Staff and Administrative Reporting Act (TIPS Act) is a comprehensive correctional reform measure designed to ensure integrity, transparency, and accountability in prison reporting systems. The Act addresses a critical gap in oversight: the deliberate falsification of incident reports and testimony by correctional staff and administrative personnel.

The Problem

Accurate reporting within correctional institutions is essential to maintaining lawful operations, protecting human rights, and ensuring accountability. However, mounting evidence from investigations, civil litigation, and oversight bodies has revealed a troubling pattern:

- Correctional staff have, in some cases, produced false or misleading reports to justify excessive force or avoid disciplinary consequences
- Inaccurate reporting has obstructed internal investigations and external oversight
- Inmates and their families often lack the means to challenge official narratives
- In the most serious cases, falsified reports have contributed to wrongful punishment, denial of medical care, and deaths in custody

Existing oversight systems are often internal, inconsistent, or insufficiently independent to detect and address this misconduct effectively.

Travis Williams' Personal Impact Statement

“I never expected that trying to report misconduct would make me a target.

Since filing complaints about staff mistreatment and retaliation, I have experienced intimidation, denial of privileges, obstruction of grievances, and ongoing fear for my safety. I've had medical restrictions ignored, personal property damaged or withheld, and my ability to communicate with my family severely impacted.

The hardest part has been feeling completely helpless — and being subjected to a prison system that has qualified immunity for all acts of misconduct through systemic false staff testimony and denial of misconduct. Despite all evidence supporting my claims, Red Onion State prison staff banded together to wave all my complaints off as though they never existed.

I live every day knowing that speaking up can bring more retaliation, but staying silent allows these practices to continue, not just against me, but against other inmates and their loved ones who are helpless against the power of false staff testimony.

This petition is bigger than my personal experience. It's about accountability, truth, and making sure no one inside a correctional facility is stripped of their humanity simply because they are incarcerated.

I am asking people to stand with me in demanding transparency, independent oversight, and real consequences for falsified reporting and abuse inside our prison system.”

— Travis E. Williams

Purpose of the Act

Key Provisions

1. Criminalization of Falsified Reporting

- Establishes clear penalties for material falsification, including perjury and obstruction of justice
- Enhances penalties in cases involving serious injury, death, or coordinated misconduct

2. Independent Oversight (IRU)

- Creates an Independent Review Unit with authority to investigate misconduct
- Provides subpoena power and referral authority for criminal prosecution

3. Mandatory Evidence Preservation

- Requires retention of surveillance footage
- Establishes consequences for tampering, destruction, or failure to record

4. Investigative Accountability Measures

- Requires full cooperation from correctional staff during investigations
- Permits the use of polygraph and credibility assessment tools in administrative proceedings, with appropriate safeguards

5. Pattern of Falsification Enforcement

- Establishes enhanced penalties for repeated or systemic misconduct
- Holds supervisory personnel accountable for failure to act

6. Duty to Report Misconduct

- Requires staff to report known or suspected falsification or abuse
- Provides protections against retaliation for those who report in good faith

7. Civil Remedies for Victims

- Provides a private right of action for individuals harmed by falsified reporting

8. Transparency and Public Reporting

- Requires publication of anonymized data on misconduct allegations and outcomes
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Impact

The TIPS Act will:

- Strengthen accountability within correctional institutions
 - Protect inmates from unlawful harm and misconduct
 - Safeguard ethical correctional officers by discouraging a “code of silence”
 - Improve the credibility of internal investigations
 - Reduce costly litigation and wrongful death claims
 - Restore public trust in correctional systems
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Fiscal and Policy Considerations

While implementation will require investment in oversight infrastructure and training, the Act is expected to reduce long-term costs associated with litigation, settlements, and federal intervention. Additionally, alignment with federal correctional reform priorities may position the state for grant funding and other support.

Conclusion

The Truth in Prison Staff and Administrative Reporting Act represents a balanced, accountability-driven approach to correctional reform. By ensuring truth and transparency in reporting, the Act protects the rights of incarcerated individuals, supports ethical correctional staff, and reinforces the rule of law within correctional institutions.

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