

*PRESS RELEASE*

*For Immediate Release*

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*Contact:*

*Mazie Stilwell, Communications Specialist*

*(515) 246-2637*

[*mstilwell@afscmeiowa.org*](mailto:mstilwell@afscmeiowa.org)

**DEPT OF CORRECTIONS DOWNPLAYS SEVERITY OF ASSAULT AT ISP**

DES MOINES – AFSCME Council 61 President Danny Homan issued the following statement in response to the Iowa Department of Corrections’ incomplete portrayal of yet another correctional officer being attacked by an inmate at the Iowa State Penitentiary in Fort Madison:

“On Friday, the Iowa Department of Corrections distributed a press release detailing the assault on a correctional officer by an inmate at the Iowa State Penitentiary. Unfortunately, the DOC failed to release the full scope of the incident. In recent days, reports from eyewitnesses detail a situation far more serious than what the Department has led the public to believe.

“A total of four inmates were involved in the assault: one who threw six punches and 13 stomps to the head and three others who helped plan the assault and attempted to slow down the responding staff while the assault was taking place. Video footage shows the group of inmates plotting at a table and watching the correctional officer make his rounds. The inmate who assaulted the correctional officer had just completed a long-term restricted housing program intended to make him less dangerous. Additionally, cocaine and a shank were discovered during the shakedown and inmate property search following the incident.

“Until yesterday, the Warden at ISP had refused to meet with union members over their concerns about the safety and security of staff within the facility. The dangerously low staffing levels at all of our correctional facilities mean that incidents like this one will continue to escalate in severity. When will Governor Reynolds and the legislative Republicans who have created this budget disaster realize that their carelessness is going to get someone killed?”

*The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Council 61 represents 40,000 public employees in Iowa including law enforcement and correctional officers, firefighters, mental health workers, professional school staff, emergency responders, and many other workers. AFSCME Council 61 also represents home health care and child care providers across the state and private sector workers at Prairie Meadows, Palmer College of Chiropractic, Des Moines University, and ABM (Marshalltown).*

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