

**CLARK-COWLITZ FIRE RESCUE
RESOLUTION NO. 230824-2**

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
CORRECTIONS TO CONTINUE OPERATIONS AT THE LARCH CORRECTIONS
CENTER**

WHEREAS, Larch Corrections Center (LCC) is slated to be closed by the Department of Corrections in October, 2023; and

WHEREAS, LCC is the only correction facility in Clark County, WA the state's fifth largest county. The closure would cause family members to travel further for visitation causing undue stress and increased costs; and

WHEREAS, LCC provides valuable education, retraining opportunities and community partnerships for inmates that reduce the recidivism rate of the inmates and provides valuable service to our community; and

WHEREAS, many of the employees of LCC live in Clark County and contribute to the area's economic viability; and

WHEREAS, LCC plays a vital role in trail maintenance and vegetation control on area recreation lands; and

WHEREAS, specifically, LCC trains inmates in critical wildfire prevention and wildfire fighting skills; and

WHEREAS, the eastern portion of Clark County consists primarily of vast woodlands susceptible to wildfire that is very challenging to fight; and

WHEREAS, the same portion of the county has severely burned several times over the past 125 years, including the Yacolt Burn in 1902 which burned 238,920 acres of timber, and most recently the Nakia Fire last summer that resulted in the evacuation of hundreds of households; and

WHEREAS, the growing population in Clark County has pushed housing developments further into said woodlands; and

WHEREAS, LCC inmates provide fast-acting and critical firefighting triage for this area.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue Board of Fire Commissioners as follows:

1. The Board of Fire Commissioners of Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue, which protects the cities of Ridgefield, La Center, and Woodland in SW Cowlitz County immediately adjacent to Clark County on Interstate 5, recognizes the vital role that LCC plays in keeping this community safe from wildland fires and aids in trail maintenance and development of area recreational lands. The Board strongly urges the Department of Corrections to reverse the decision to close Larch Correctional facility.
2. The District Secretary of Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue is hereby directed to forward copies of this resolution to the offices of the Washington State Department of Commerce, the Governor, and such other offices as applicable.
3. This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption by the Board.

ADOPTED by the Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue Board of Commissioners in Ridgefield, Washington, at a regular meeting of said Board on the 24th day of August, 2023, the following Commissioners being present and voting.

Commissioner Stanley Chunn – Chair

Commissioner David Town - Vice Chair

Commissioner Larry Bartel

Commissioner Ken Ayers

Commissioner Jade Bourke

Attest: District Secretary