Sheridan – Rob Fanti

I am Rob Fanti, President of AFSCME Local 472 at Sheridan Correctional Center. We’ve been DOC’s big success story since we reopened in 2004 as a dedicated substance abuse treatment facility. But right now DOC is setting up a situation at Sheridan that is like pouring gas on a fire—all as a result of the plan to close Dwight Correctional Center.

Our program was designed for 950 inmates, and that is what we have been staffed for. About two years ago when Governor Quinn ended the MGT program, of course DOC’s population went up. They needed bed space. Because we had 4 empty units they increased our population to 1,700. We were supposed to get 50 additional security staff and we never got them. We logged over $3 million in overtime last year.

Right now, half our inmates don’t have any work assignments and over half who should be are not in school because there are not enough educators to teach them. We only have 2 teachers for 1,700 inmates. All our inmates are still considered to be in substance abuse treatment, but it’s not the intensive therapeutic community as it was designed because of the lack of staff. We have 350 inmates who basically run their own treatment without any professional guidance.

Since Sheridan reopened the inmates are here voluntarily and agree to treatment, so we don’t usually have a lot of assaults. But our assaults on staff more than doubled last year because of overcrowding. DOC says we are getting those 50 security staff we should have had two years ago, but because of the closures we are also getting 300 more inmates. They are male inmates moving out of Logan, which DOC is converting to female so they can close Dwight.

Our population will be 2,000. I’ve worked at Sheridan 21 years and we’ve never housed that many inmates even before we were a treatment facility. We aren’t getting any increase in support staff or substance abuse treatment. We will no longer be a dedicated treatment facility; the inmates with addiction problems will be in the regular population with no treatment.

Now the Governor might say he just signed a bill to restore good time, and that should reduce the population. But that bill requires earned good time - you have to be in school or in treatment. These 300 inmates coming from Logan had programs there. And now they’re shipped to Sheridan where they will have nothing to do, and no way to earn their good time. They are going to be angry and have a lot of time on their hands. The increase in assaults I talked about will be nothing compared to what we’ll see if the Governor is allowed to close these facilities.
Vienna – Mike Turner

My name is Mike Turner. I’m the AFSCME president at Vienna – Local 415. We’re a minimum security facility but overcrowding and understaffing is causing more violence.

We are designated a step down program. Inmates are supposed to earn their way to Vienna through good behavior, which is why we usually have very low violence.

We are built to house 995 inmates but we have more than 1,850 now. In the last several months as DOC is dealing with more overcrowding, I’ve noticed we are getting a different type of inmate, right from Stateville, and they haven’t earned their way in. DOC is just looking for any empty bed, and we aren’t built or staffed to deal with this type of inmate. We’re having fights daily from scuffles to serious incidents.

Last month a Sergeant intervened in an altercation between an officer and inmate. The Sergeant separated the inmate and was trying to talk to him. The inmate brushed him off and tried to leave the building which he wasn’t authorized to do. The Sergeant pursued him, and the inmate turned around and punched him in the head. The Sergeant wrestled him to the ground and eventually staff arrived to restrain the inmate. The sergeant suffered injuries to his head and shoulder.

Last week an inmate was beaten by another inmate. He looked like he was struck in the face above the eyes with something hard and heavy like a padlock in a sock. The assailant is not yet identified because there was no staff witness and the inmate refuses to say who assaulted him. Internal Affairs believes it may be gang related.

We’re also seeing inmates tossing gang signs on the sidewalk, using gang nicknames out in the open, graffiti. It’s always been very unusual to have gang related activity at Vienna.

We aren’t built or staffed to handle a rougher population. The housing units share a communal bathroom – you can’t lock them down. There are 48 inmates on a wing with two sides, staffed by one officer. As the officer moves from one side of the wing to the other the inmates are alone on their side of the housing unit for several minutes at a time. That’s becoming a concern now.

We have a population of 1,800 to 1,900 but we only have 32 total segregation beds. Since seg is virtually full every day we have to pick and choose who we lock up, and take someone out of seg early to house a more serious offender.

Last year we had 6 inmate fights in the whole month of July. This year there were four fights just in the first week of July. It’s just a matter of time until someone is seriously hurt. And it will get worse if the closures go forward.
Menard - Kevin Hirsch

My name is Kevin Hirsch, I’m the president of AFSCME Local 1175 at Menard Correctional Center. I worked on a Menard cell house back in the 90’s and I already see us slipping back. We’ve got too many inmates, we’re losing Tamms as a safety valve, and we don’t have enough staff.

Gangs were our big problem in the 90’s. The purpose of Tamms was to geographically remove the leaders to stop them stirring trouble.

On June 3 we had an assault on an officer who was moving a line going out to chow. It appeared to be ordered by a gang. Two inmates got on either side of the officer for a simultaneous hit. The officer was badly battered and is still off work.

A three day shakedown after the incident recovered 21 shanks. I can’t recall the last time we found that many shanks all at once.

A few days after, while we were still on lockdown, one inmate stabbed another inmate repeatedly with an ink pen. When staff went in to separate them an officer trying to protect the inmate got his hand broken. He’s out of his cast but still on light duty.

We’re seeing this resurgence of gang activity before they’ve even fully closed Tamms down. With Tamms the gang leaders who called the shots were isolated and that made staff and inmates safer. Bringing them back to Menard emboldens the gangs.

Beside Tamms’ role as a deterrent, its closure is going to create more overcrowding at Menard. We are one of only four maximum security facilities and there will only be three if we lose Tamms. We already house 500 more inmates than we were designed to hold. Last week one of our four segregation galleries was converted to open cells to house general population because DOC needed the beds.

We understand we are getting Tamms inmates, but not getting any more staff to handle them. Already the staffing is dangerously low. The segregation block has 40 staff on day shift, but on 3-11 it’s down to 12 staff. If you have to do a cell extraction you don’t have adequate staff to keep everybody safe. And we hear the plan is to put the Tamms inmates in the ADA cells, built for disabled inmates. Doing a cell extraction from one of those cells is a tactical nightmare.

The only way to stop us sliding back is to stop the closures and hire more staff.
Pinckneyville – Randy Hellman

My name is Randy Hellman and I’m the president of AFSCME Local 943. I’ve worked in corrections for 29 years and I’m very concerned that we’re backsliding to the days when Illinois prisons were out of control.

Pinckneyville Correctional Center is a medium security prison. We’ve had 41 inmate-on-inmate assaults and 13 inmate assaults on staff in the last 6 months. Here are some recent examples.

Just this past Sunday night there was a gang fight involving 5 inmates. One inmate targeted another inmate, chased him with a shank and repeatedly stabbed him in the head, face and wrist. There was a lot of blood on the scene and that inmate is still hospitalized. Two other inmates stood guard to allow the attack, and struck another inmate who tried to intervene. A fifth inmate did intervene and got the shank away from the attacker, but was stabbed in the head. He is still in the healthcare unit.

In June an inmate at the phones assaulted another inmate then turned and picked up a CO and threw the officer over his shoulder. Two officers responding were injured: one has now returned to work on light duty status and the other injured his hip.

Also in June a Sergeant intervening in an inmate fight in dietary was thrown against a steel table, cutting the lower part of his leg. The wound required staples for closure. The inmates were gang involved.

In May an inmate who was removed from his Anger Management Class at the request of the mental health professional refused to move through the metal detector. He punched a correctional officer who remains off work due to the injuries to this day. When the shift commander attempted to cuff him, the inmate knocked the commander to the ground and threatened to kill him.

In April a segregation inmate took his cell mate hostage. He slipped his cuffs coming back from the shower. Once placed in the cell the inmate grabbed two eyeglass arms he had honed to a point and held them to his cell mate’s neck.

The method that DOC uses to track assaults does not accurately reflect what is happening in our prisons. The department tracks assaults by incident and not by the number of people who were assaulted. The DOC method downplays the problem. But we track the assault numbers independently at our facility – by the number of staff or inmates assaulted - because we need to track this increase in violence. This is just the start of the problems we’re going to have if these prison closures go forward.
Tamms isn’t closed yet. But at Pinckneyville we are already at maximum capacity, and we are already getting inmates we were not built to hold.

Maybe you noticed when I talked about the inmate who took his cell mate hostage, he was in segregation. All of our segregation cells are now double celled.

We are a medium security facility but recently DOC has been sending us maximum security inmates - lifers and inmates with more than 20 years left to serve on their sentences. Just recently Menard – a maximum security facility – had a shakedown and shipped us 6 inmates, all murderers serving anywhere from 30 to 85 years. They admit a medium facility shouldn’t house these kind of inmates. We aren’t built for that level of security. But they are still at Pinckneyville because there is no place else to put them.

Closing Tamms will greatly increase the pressure on the three maximum security facilities—and that will greatly increase the pressure on medium security facilities like mine. It shows a real lack of concern for the officers who are out there every day putting their safety on the line.
Graham – Chad Zumwalt

My name is Chad Zumwalt, president of AFSCME Local 2856. I’ve worked for DOC for 16 years, and I’ve been at Graham since 1998.

There’s obviously a growing problem with violence at Graham if you just look at the numbers. Graham is a medium security level facility. We have had 36 fights and assaults so far this year, up from 23 in the same time last year. We are seeing 5 and 6 fights per month when it used to be 2-3 a month.

It used to be if you had a fight at Graham, the inmates would stop when a uniformed officer got there. Before this year, it’s hard for me to remember the last time we used chemical agents like pepper spray at Graham to get a situation under control. We’ve had three incidents where we used them in just the last three months – two incidents where inmates refused to cuff up, and an assault on a Lieutenant.

Last week 4 notes were discovered in a cell house threatening an specific officer. I spoke directly to an officer who saw the notes and he felt the CO’s life was in danger.

I think this instability at Graham is the impact of the conversion of Logan to a female facility and the Tamms closure.

Monday night our population was posted at 1,959. That’s the highest population I’ve ever seen at Graham prison. That’s two-thirds more than our design capacity. Our Reception and Classification unit is packed to the gills.

During the attempt to close Logan last fall, DOC planned to house inmates in the Graham gym. The way this is going I’m concerned we will see a similar plan coming. This isn’t safe for staff or inmates.
I'm Ralph Portwood, President of AFSCME Local 1866 at Stateville Correctional Center. Stateville is a maximum security facility, which also includes the Northern Reception and Classification intake unit. We have 500 more inmates than our facility was designed to house. Because of overcrowding and working short staffed, we’ve had three serious assaults on officers in less than 3 months in the NRC alone.

In May it was in the visiting room. An inmate’s girlfriend left, but he refused to exit the Visiting Room which was crowded and understaffed. The inmate became combative. The Lieutenant had to wrestle him down, injuring the Lt. who was transported to the hospital by ambulance and has a torn bicep. He is still off work and will be for a while due to surgery. Chemical agents had to be used and an officer was exposed and required medical attention.

At the NRC you’ve got 12 to 15 officers in charge of moving 150 to 200 inmates on a daily basis from cubicle to cubicle for classification – the dentist, the psychologist, the counselor. These are inmates just brought in from county jails. We are unaware of who is volatile, who does not get along with who, or if the offenders are mentally unstable or just coming down off a high. Due to short staffing, these inmates usually sit for about 9 hours or longer while they are being classified. It’s a congested and tense environment. The same officers must also process parole violators, and move inmates for visits and x-rays.

In these overcrowded and congested conditions, we had an officer assaulted by an inmate two weeks ago while moving inmates through the process. The officer had to be taken to the hospital by ambulance and had a severely injured knee.

Officers at the NRC are assigned to cover two units by themselves. There used to be two staff, one working each unit. Now with short staffing, the norm is to have 1 person working both units. Again, many of these offenders are unclassified and we have no idea of their history.

In May a Correctional Officer was running showers on 2 gallery in the NRC. The Officer went to get the next guy out of his cell. He opened the door and the offender attacked the Officer. He had to try to fight the inmate off alone on the gallery for 5 to 10 minutes. Nobody is watching the cameras, nobody is monitoring in the control center, you only have your radio if something goes wrong. The officer got on top of the offender and got him to the ground but couldn’t get to his radio. But he got lucky. A main control officer was delivering mail on the unit. She witnessed the assault and called for assistance.
The Officer was taken to the hospital. He was banged up, had an eye swollen shut, a jaw injury. He is still off work. He sees a therapist once a week, and does not sleep well. The Officer talks about how he had two sets of keys on him. If the offender had a cell mate they could have let out 180 guys. They could have taken over that cell house. One more officer would have prevented that assault.

There are many other examples. A Correctional Sergeant, was assaulted in November. He was standing by D House showers. An offender hit him in the head one time and before he could defend himself, he was struck another time and lost consciousness. An Officer assisted in subduing the offender. When the Sergeant came to, he was covered in blood. As of today’s date he is still off work as a result of his injuries, including three cuts to his head, a cut to his lip that required three stitches, ten stitches in his right ear, front cracked tooth, scrapes and cuts to his elbows and knees, physical therapy for his lower back, neck and shoulder. He also has numbness in his shoulder and left forearm. The Sergeant suffers from nightmares and headaches and is being treated by a psychiatrist.

A Correctional Counselor was assaulted while conducting rounds on three gallery in E House. He heard an offender say, “Now I got you” and the offender began punching him in the face. The counselor was hit numerous times. He was able to get the offender off of him by jabbing him with his pen. His injuries included a fractured nose requiring surgery, an eye fracture which shoved his eye socket back four centimeters resulting in two surgeries, a fractured cheek bone which required one surgery and is now covered with wire mesh, hematoma to the right ear requiring one surgery, seven stitches on right cheek and three stitches in his upper lip.

One final story. In April we had a big gang fight at Stateville. A Vice Lord got sent in to Stateville, a gang leader, and he stirred it up. We had Vice Lords, Gangster Disciples and different gang affiliations fighting. We had to use chemicals, and we cuffed and shipped out a lot of guys from that fight. It shocked the newer staff. We haven’t had a gang fight like that with that many guys getting involved in a long time. We don’t want to see things heading back to the days when the gangs had the run of the prisons.
St. Charles – Jan Bradley

My name is Jan Bradley. I am the president of AFSCME Local 416 which represents employees at St. Charles and Warrenville Youth Centers.

St. Charles is a medium security facility. Youth assaults have been getting more severe for the past couple years. About a year ago there was a riot in which several youth attacked security staff, punching them in the face and kicking them in the head when they were on the ground. I’ve worked there 25 years and I’ve never seen anything like it. Four staff were injured so severely they were off work.

Last fall a youth attacked a teacher, punching him in the neck and head over 15 times. The employee was traumatized by the event and is still off work.

I know we’re not alone. IYC Harrisburg reports 30-40 fights per month and more instances of 2-3 youths jumping one youth.

If the Governor is allowed to close the Illinois Youth center at Joliet, then St. Charles, Harrisburg and Kewanee will be receiving maximum security youth who we’re not at all equipped to deal with. The violence is going to get worse. Kids and staff are going to be hurt.

Harrisburg, Kewanee and St. Charles have already begun to receive maximum security youth from Joliet in the last two weeks.

The maximum security youth we’ve gotten from Joliet are mixing with the rest of the kids – they are housed separately but have no other restrictions. Because of the building closures our confinement unit has the reception and medical kids now.

There are about 80 “consent decree” youth at Joliet. They were arrested for a new crime while on parole and were charged as adults. We’re talking criminal sexual assault, armed robbery, highjacking with a firearm, home invasion, and murder. Under a federal consent decree, DJJ has to hold them while their case is pending, then they’ll be sentenced to an adult prison. At Joliet they are kept apart from even the other maximum security youth because they are older and more violent. They have separate housing, gym, school and meal times. We can’t do that at St. Charles. Our less violent offenders will be mixing with these far more dangerous individuals.

The closures don’t make sense, and the Governor should change his mind before someone—a youth or an employee—gets seriously hurt.
Western – Mark Mountain

I’m Mark Mountain, President of AFSCME Local 3567. I have worked at Western Correctional Center for 24 years. Once the announcement was made to close Tamms the inmates knew they were be less consequence for their actions. We’re definitely seeing an unusual amount of violence. The number and frequency of incidents is increasing, and inmates don’t respond the same way they used to when staff intervene.

Here is just a sample of what we logged at Western in June and July:

June 5: an inmate was being taken to segregation. The inmate spun around and hit the Sergeant. An officer tried to contain the inmate, there was a struggle and the inmate bit a large chunk out of the officer’s arm. He was taken to the hospital and missed several days of work. The sergeant is still being treated for shoulder and back injuries he sustained.

June 16: a correctional officer attempted to break up a fight between 2 inmates in dietary. It used to be that if inmates were fighting and security staff approached they would stop. In this case – and this is happening more often lately – they didn’t stop fighting and a Food Supervisor had to assist. They had to use pepper spray to contain the fight.

June 28: there was another fight among inmates and again we had to use pepper spray to break it up.

June 29: two inmates were fighting and staff responded. Again, they wouldn’t stop so pepper spray was used. One of the inmates turned against the Officer and struck him.

July 7: a Sergeant was breaking up a fight when one of the inmates turned his aggression on the Sergeant. The Sergeant had to fight off the inmate for 5 minutes until staff responded. We were working short that day – we are short of all kinds of staff including supervisors. In a fight you want a Lieutenant present because they carry cuffs and pepper spray, so their presence sends a message. Because we were short, the closest Lieutenant was too far away. If you’ve been in an altercation, 5 minutes is a lifetime. The Sergeant was punched in the face and head several times, his knee was injured and his glasses broken.

I saw the impact it had on Western when Tamms opened. Now I’m starting to see things headed in the wrong direction. If the Governor were in my shoes he’d see it too.
I’m Rob Osborne, president of AFSCME Local 993 at Vandalia Correctional Center.

Vandalia is a minimum security prison, but our assault numbers are already increasing. In minimum security it’s really odd to have assaults, yet we’re seeing more of them now. Last year we had only 3 assaults the whole year, and no instances of sexual misconduct. This year we’ve already had 6 assaults and 5 incidents of sexual misconduct.

Our population is 500 inmates above our design capacity, so overcrowding is already a problem. So is short staffing. We average 17 posts a day that have to be filled by having someone work overtime.

If Tamms closes, our overcrowding and understaffing is going to get a whole lot worse. DOC says it will reclassify inmates to make the plan work. In this case Menard and Pontiac will get Tamms inmates. Lawrence, Big Muddy and other medium security prisons will get the maximum inmates. Then Vandalia minimum prisons like us will get medium inmates we wouldn’t normally get. All DOC is doing is reclassifying more dangerous inmates as less dangerous to fit the criteria. It will trickle down to us in Vandalia.

Vandalia is an open door facility. We have no cells, just 90 beds in each house that’s wide open. So when we get these reclassified inmates we have more violence. We wrote 112 fighting tickets so far this year. Two of the assaults were inmate on inmate beatings, one with a broom, the other with a dayroom chair.

I’d like to see the brakes put on these closures before this rolls down on us.
Dixon – Lori Laidlaw

The overcrowding and difficulty in shipping out violent inmates with the start of the Tamms closure is driving up assaults at Dixon Correctional Center. We saw a 28% increase in the number of assaults on staff the first half of this year compared to the same time last year, and it was even more dramatic for inmate on inmate assaults - a 64% increase.

We have over 2,300 inmates right now. Our rated capacity is only about 1,400. But the maximum security facilities are full too. So we have inmates with a history of assaults and we’re not shipping them out when they commit a new assault. Here are some recent examples:

A week ago an inmate threw a punch at an officer. The officer blocked the punch, pushed the inmate back into his cell and shut door. The officer was lucky he was alert enough to avoid injury – he had been mandated to work overtime. This inmate has a history of violence including a conviction for aggravated battery of a peace officer.

Then we had an officer moving an inmate out of his segregation cell. He spit in the face of another inmate which precipitated a fight. The officer was able to get the inmate back into his cell, but in the struggle he suffered a painful muscle strain in his abdomen and was off work for 4 days. This inmate has a history of violence, but he is still at Dixon.

An inmate with a history of assaulting staff, including a conviction for beating a correctional officer in 2009, was being out of the visiting room. The inmate was cuffed. The officer was walking behind him as was the procedure for this inmate who had recently assaulted another officer. The inmate stopped suddenly and slammed the officer back against a wall. The officer was taken to the ER because his arm was cut open and he injured his knee.

We have an inmate who is known for brutal beatings of other inmates. He gets them down on the ground and kicks them. We move him to a more secure cell, but we don’t ship him out. He has also attempted assaults on officers. Staff are concerned he will kill someone.

We have a notorious inmate who was part of the secret early release program despite his violent past. He violated his release, but then was paroled again, and just a few weeks later killed a grandmother and left her grandbaby lying in a puddle next to the body. The inmate regularly tries to assault staff even when he is in hand cuffs.

All of these inmates should be on the road to Tamms. Without Tamms, we are all going to be a lot less secure.
My name is Gregg Johnson and I am the president of AFSCME Local 46 at East Moline Correctional Center. Facility closures are putting my members at risk, with too many inmates and not enough staff.

Our population is higher than it’s ever been at about 1,300. We are due to get another 70 inmates by the end of the month. We were designed to hold less than 700 inmates. Closing prisons in this environment is insane.

And we have fewer security staff than we’ve ever had - only 126 correctional officers. Back before DOC started trying to run prisons on overtime we had fewer inmates and a lot more staff. In 2000 we had a population of 1,100 and 211 security staff. We have 85 fewer officers now, but more population.

East Moline is a minimum security facility. Facilities like us are supposed to have programs and get inmates ready to go back to their communities. Now we are just stacking them in. There are inmates working jobs earning money for their families at some of these ATCs who are going to be shipped back to a prison.

Putting more inmates in confined spaces creates a dangerous situation. You can barely walk through some of our dormitories because they are so crowded. That builds tension in the facility.

Then with the short staffing, if something explosive happens you may not have any backup. Overtime is so common, in one 24 hour period we had 22 officers that worked 16 hours straight. This overcrowding calls for more vigilance, but it’s hard to stay on top of things when you are exhausted.

Somebody has got to see sense and stop these closures.
My name is Jake Dalton and I am a Trustee of AFSCME Local 494 at Pontiac Correctional Center where I’ve worked for 15 years.

Pontiac is a maximum security facility. I’m a correctional officer in the North Cell House where we house the most aggressive segregation inmates. At the end of May a Lieutenant was stabbed by one of our inmates. The inmate refused to cuff up. The Lieutenant responded. The inmate reached out of the door hatch with a shank and stabbed the Lieutenant in the right bicep. The inmate remained combative and there was a struggle. The Lieutenant fell and struck his elbow. He required hospital treatment and was off work for some days.

We have three segregation units at Pontiac: the North, West and East Cell Houses. Until very recently all segregation was single celled. Now the Tamms inmates will be moved into North. Our North inmates will move into West, and the West inmates have to move into East Cell House, so that will be double celled. A lot of guys in West and East shouldn’t be double manned with anyone. It’s hard to segregate somebody when there are two people in a cell.

In addition to about 60 segregation inmates from Tamms in North Cell House, it’s our understanding Pontiac is getting another 90 inmates from Tamms who are in administrative detention that will be housed in the old condemned unit which is also in North house.

My greatest concern about this plan is the status and type of inmates we’re going to be receiving. It’s a concentration of known gang leaders and troublemakers all in one place. The influence these guys have in their respective gangs means the possibility of coordinated violence and destruction rises exponentially. For example, an extreme high escape risk inmate was housed in North House. He coordinated a plan with multiple inmates to flood the cellhouse at the same time. The participants refused to cuff up and had to be forcibly extracted from their cells. This inmate was transferred to Tamms. If one inmate has the influence to cause a disruption of that magnitude, imagine how much worse it will be when the Tamms inmates are transferred to Pontiac.

A related concern is that we don’t even have enough staff to run Pontiac right now. We are running overtime every day and mandating every day. You have institutional movement you have to get done every day like move inmates to the doctor or get showers taken care of while you are also monitoring the cell house. You just can’t do that safely without enough staff.

So for example:
• According to segregation unit procedures you should have two officers present any time you take a segregation offender out of a cell. But it’s just not done because we don’t have the staff.

• There is supposed to be a Lieutenant in the cell house any time a door is opened. But on some shifts we have Lieutenants covering multiple posts so they can’t always be where they need to be especially during an emergency.

• We have staff intensive inmates where security procedures require an officer to stay with them when we move them. If we have a lot of inmates moving – say to the doctor - we end up having gallery officers going with them to the healthcare unit and sitting with them for however long it takes. That could be an hour and a half off the gallery for the officer, which means some inmates on that gallery may not be seen once every half hour like they’re supposed to be.

Double celling segregation inmates and shipping more staff-intensive inmates to Pontiac is going to make a bad situation worse. I can foresee it will be a very dangerous situation. In fact, with the double celling our population will rise to approximately 1,900 inmates, the same amount of inmates that were at Pontiac in July of 1978 when Officers Cole and Conkle and Lt. Thomas lost their lives in the worst riot in our state’s history. I wish whoever made the decision to close Tamms could see how dangerous the situation is too.