

RESOLUTION NO. 1-011912-03

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS REGARDING THE CLOSURE OF  
JEFFERSON CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

WHEREAS, Jefferson County is one of the smallest of Florida's counties, located east of Leon County;

WHEREAS, Jefferson County is one of Florida's oldest counties with a rich cultural history, beautiful natural assets, and friendly small communities of citizens that treat all people (even prisoners) with respect and dignity;

WHEREAS, being a small rural community, Jefferson County, like other rural areas in Florida, is challenged by significant economic factors, is considered by the Florida Department of Revenue as "fiscally constrained" and is designated as a "Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern";

WHEREAS, the Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern status affords Jefferson County special consideration in State Agency actions and requires state agencies to minimize the impact of their decisions on RACEC counties and provide support that will improve conditions in our community;

WHEREAS, the Florida Department of Corrections has announced its intention to close the Jefferson Correctional Institution by April 1, 2012;

WHEREAS, the Jefferson Correctional Institution is the largest employer in the county and the loss of jobs and the impact on the local economy and community will be substantial, estimated to have a \$19 million impact on local economic activity and uprooting longtime residents who must move elsewhere to find new jobs;

WHEREAS, the evaluation system used to determine the prison closure was developed without opportunity for public input;

WHEREAS, the Jefferson Correctional Institution has significant unrecognized "Special Attributes" in that (1) it is the state's largest "Psyche 3" unit and the "go to" unit for prisoners on psychotropic drugs, and (2) in spite of its high risk inmates, it is the only state prison facility to have never called out a rapid response team, a tribute to the unique staff culture at Jefferson Correctional;

WHEREAS, the evaluation of the Jefferson Correctional Institution did not credit or consider Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern status or provide for consideration of important "Special Attributes" that would have, as in other instances, modified the outcome;

WHEREAS, no state legislator, local elected official, economic development representative, community leaders, business owner, or citizens were afforded the opportunity to review, observe, or comment on the decision making process or the proposal;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, FLORIDA THAT:

Because of the important attributes of Jefferson Corrections Institution and the significant impact that the closure of Jefferson Correctional Institution would have on our county, WE REQUEST THAT THE GOVERNOR AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS REMOVE JEFFERSON CORRECTIONAL INSTUTUTION FROM THE CLOSURE LIST.

RESOLVED this 19th day of January 2012.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, FLORIDA