Local groups: Don’t let politics derail prison reform

WHAT: Advocacy groups working on behalf of the mentally ill, people recovering from substance use disorders, and individuals trapped in Utah’s criminal justice system will host a press conference on Monday, March 9, 10:00AM to call on lawmakers to ensure that the prison relocation process results in the best outcomes for these under-served, easily-ignored populations.

Rather than fighting about where to put a new prison, as advocates, we believe that the public should be engaged in supporting the correctional and criminal justice reform that could be realized with new and innovative prison facilities. “We can acknowledge that siting a prison is difficult, while at the same time demanding that the state do what is best for the people under its care in that prison facility,” says ACLU of Utah Public Policy Advocate Anna Brower. “We need to move beyond political fear and ‘Not In My Backyard’ complaints, and move ahead in meeting our constitutional and humanitarian obligations.”

WHO: Participating organizations include:
- NAMI-UTAH
- Utah Support Advocates for Recovery Awareness (USARA)
- ACLU of Utah
- Disability Law Center (DLC)
- New Roads Behavioral Health
- Odyssey House
- First Step House
- Utah Association of Addiction Treatment Providers (UAATP)
- AFL-CIO

Available speakers include:
- Justin Miller, AFSCME
- Jean Hill, Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake
- Aaron Kinikini, Disability Law Center
- Mary Jo McMillen, USARA
- Dale Cox, AFL-CIO
- Shawn McMillen, Adam Cohen, Spencer Palmer, UAATP

WHEN: Monday, March 9, 2015, 10:00AM

WHERE: Disability Law Center, 205 North 400 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84103

WHY: This press conference will offer opportunities for media representatives to better understand why these advocacy groups are supportive of the prison relocation.
The Disability Law Center (DLC) is a private non-profit organization. The DLC’s mission is to enforce and strengthen laws that protect the opportunities, choices and legal rights of Utahns with disabilities. Our services are available statewide and free of charge, regardless of income, legal status, language, or place of residence.

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Press kits and photos available to the media upon request. For interviews, or more information regarding the Disability Law Center, please contact Aaron Kinikini at (801) 363-1347, or email akinikini@disabilitylawcenter.org.