

Plan to Stem Drugs at Lorton Announced

By Linda duBuclet
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D.C. Del. Walter E. Fauntroy yesterday announced a series of measures that have "the aim of rooting out drug trafficking and drug use at Lorton Reformatory."

Fauntroy said his plan was in response to a current Washington Post series that has described how visitors on occasion have taken illegal drugs to Lorton inmates.

During a press conference in which he was joined by John Cusack, chief of staff of the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, Fauntroy announced a four-point plan to "bring together the resources of the federal government with those in our local government" in attacking "what appears to be a serious drug problem at Lorton Reformatory."

The plan includes an oversight hearing to determine what the District government is doing about the problem and to bring in experts; a series of roundtable meetings between the District government, federal drug officials and experts to make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council; tours by community leaders of the Lorton facility and the vehicles that take visitors to and from the prison; and drug prevention presentations at Lorton patterned after those in Shaw and other communities that have had problems with drugs.

"My reason for responding so quickly to this is that I have become very sensitized to drug trafficking," Fauntroy said.

Referring to his drug abuse work at New Bethel Baptist Church in Shaw, where he is pastor, and his membership on the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and



By John McDonnell—The Washington Post

"More than 60 percent of all criminal cases in the District are drug-related, and the numbers are growing," D.C. Del. Walter E. Fauntroy said yesterday, when he announced a series of measures that have "the aim of rooting out drug trafficking and drug use at Lorton Reformatory."

"If we can't control drugs at Lorton, we won't be able to control drugs anywhere," he said.

Control, Fauntroy said, "Whenever you say drug trafficking in Washington, my ears perk up."

Fauntroy outlined specific ways to deal with the drug problem at Lorton, "such as a systematic and unscheduled urinalysis, additional sentencing for drug abuse, arrest and prosecution of drug trafficking visitors and expanded drug counseling." But he added that he was not endorsing any of those ideas, pending the oversight hearing and roundtable meetings specified in his plan.

The first oversight hearing is scheduled for March 22.

"This is an area that is really new to me," said Fauntroy, referring to the drug trafficking methods used by Lorton visitors as reported in the Post series. He added that "I have heard in some instances the drugs were brought in by guards."

When asked if strip-searching of visitors was an option, Fauntroy said, "Without question, strip-searching will be an issue in our consultations . . . [but] I don't wish to see us go to such a restrictive process

Fauntroy said there was a need to find a solution that is a "happy medium" between the present situation and strip-searching or going back to the days when prison inmates and their visitors were separated by a glass barrier.

Fauntroy added that the drug problem at Lorton is not isolated and that correctional facilities in the federal, state and local systems are experiencing similar problems.

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