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Governor Christie: Incarceration Is Not Only About Protection, But Also Rehabilitation

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Governor Christie: Incarceration Is Not Only About Protection, But...



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Transcript:

Governor Christie: I absolutely believe that drug addiction is a disease. I believe it's a disease that can and should be treated. And I believe that it leads to a lot of the crime that we have in this state and to a lot of ruined lives and ruined families. The whole idea of incarceration in the first place is not only just to keep people who have exhibited anti-social behavior off the streets to protect the folks who are following the law, following the rules on the street. But it's also supposed to be about rehabilitation. I don't know how we can effectively rehabilitate someone who has been involved in criminal activity if the root of their criminal activity is drug use and abuse and we're not treating them for that in a way that uses the most modern techniques, the most available treatments for folks. So that's why when Gary came to me three years ago and said to me that because of a declining prison population at the state level we were going to be able to close this facility. We thought of this idea as a better way to deal with it. I can't believe that's three years ago now but it's an extraordinary moment to be able to have all of you around this table and to know that people are now going to be getting treatment that will help them when they leave the corrections institution to have a chance to have a better life. We're supposed to believe in second chances for folks, at least I do, and I don't think you can give someone a second chance with both hands tied behind their back, and we know that drug addiction ties their hands behind their back, leads them to recidivism, leads them to more anti-social activity, but just as importantly, prevents them from becoming an important part of their family again. A good father and mother. A good son and daughter. A good brother and sister.

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