

Private prison firm pushes Lansing upgrade plan

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — A private corrections company's CEO is seeking to reassure Kansas lawmakers that a plan they're reviewing for building a new state prison is the most cost-effective option.

A joint committee on budget issues met Wednesday to review a plan for a new prison for 2,400 inmates in Lansing to replace the state's oldest and largest prison there.

The state Department of Corrections wants to have private-prison giant CoreCivic build the prison and lease it to the state for the first 20 years.

A union representing state employees questioned whether the lease-purchase deal would be cheaper than having the state issue bonds to finance the project. But CoreCivic CEO Damon Hininger told the panel that it can build the project faster than the state can and with lower financing costs.

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