

# GOOD AFTERNOON



**AMBER ROBBINS**

**Management & Program Analyst Supervisor**

I joined the Performance Audit team in 2014 from Montana State University with a Master's degree in Statistics. I've been involved in five performance audits related to Corrections in the last six years, in areas ranging from secure facilities to community-based supervision and treatment programs.

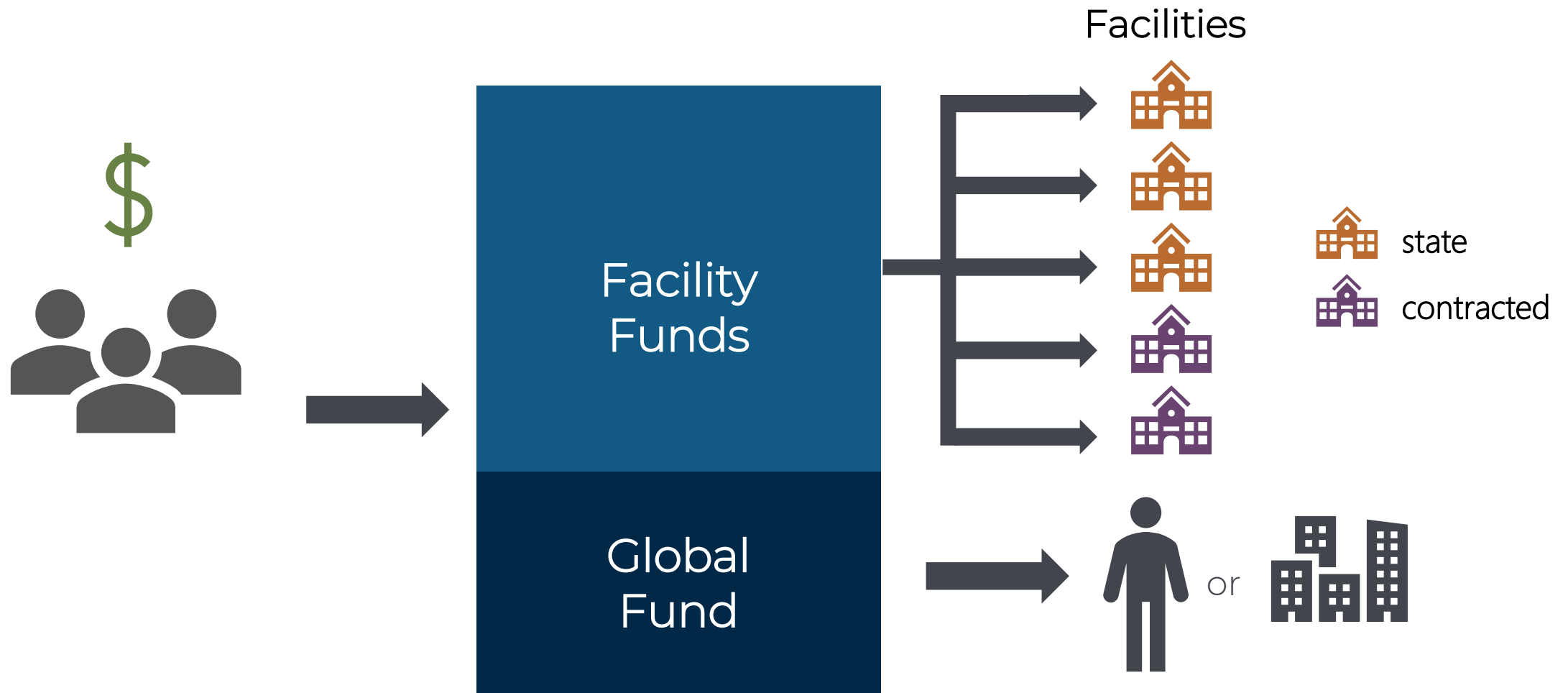
Department of Corrections

# INMATE WELFARE FUND

- Background
- Objective
- What we did
- What we found
- Recommendation



# WHAT IS THE IWF?





“

... **may not be used**  
to provide services, supplies, or  
equipment that the Department  
or facility is **obligated to provide**  
for the health, welfare, security  
of inmates, or the general  
operation of a prison.



# OBJECTIVE

Determine whether the department administers the IWF according to state law and department policy.

# WHAT WE DID

## LAW & POLICY/PROCEDURE REVIEW

State law, department policy & procedure

## REVENUE SAMPLE

50 items from SABHRS in FY2019-2021

## EXPENDITURE SAMPLE

141 items in FY2019-2021

## STAFF INTERVIEWS & OBSERVATIONS

Facility administrators (all facilities) & others;  
observed IWF meeting at MSP

## INMATE REP INTERVIEWS

Inmate representatives (MSP and CCC)

## OTHER STATES

Idaho, North Dakota, Washington, & Wyoming



## WHAT WE FOUND

**IWF was generally administered according to law and policy...**

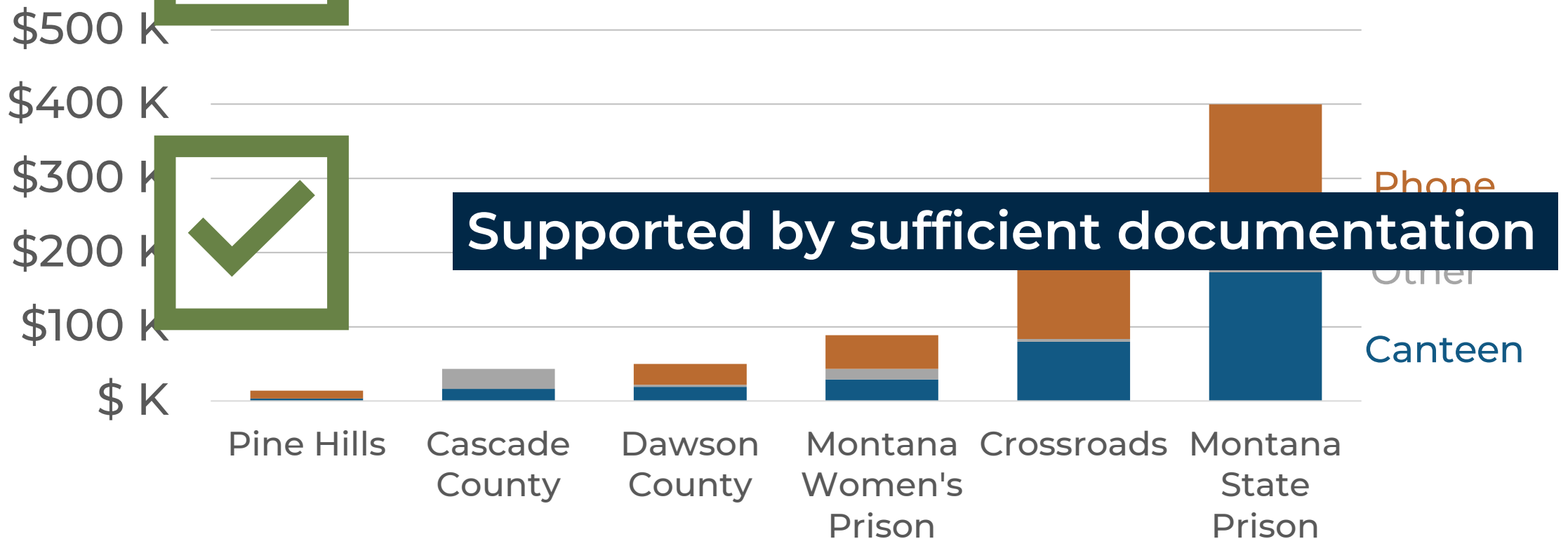
**However, there were some inappropriate and questionable IWF expenses and inconsistencies in administrative practices.**

# IWF REVENUE

Most IWF revenue came from **phone contract commissions** and **canteen sales**.

FY2021 IWF Revenue by

**From appropriate sources**





# IWF EXPENDITURES

Examples of **appropriate** IWF expenditures:

- Entertainment
- Rec equipment
- Appliances used by inmates
- Hobby supplies
- Holiday handouts
- Family events
- Inmate wages (certain inmate jobs)
- Staff pay (e.g., sick-bed visits, supervising tournaments)
- Individual release assistance from Global Fund

# IWF EXPENDITURES: Inappropriate

## Clerical Errors or Staff Turnover

- A chaplain renewal membership fee
- One washing machine & three dryers
- Hotel room for staff transporting offender
- Plane ticket for extradition from California

## Varying Interpretations of Policy

- Ice & water dispenser for infirmary in FY2019
- Professional license renewal fee for one inmate at MSP

# IWF EXPENDITURES: Questionable

State or Facility  
Responsibility

Items provided  
to indigent  
inmates



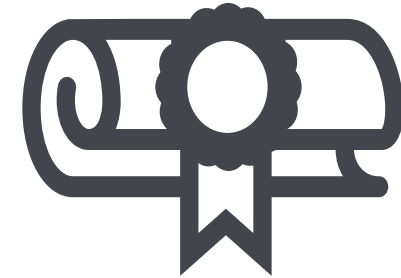
About \$28,000  
annually  
(all facilities)

Equipment for  
legal research



A one-time  
purchase of about  
\$12,000 in FY19  
(Global Fund)

Annual license  
renewal for GED  
program



\$1,350  
annually  
(CCC)

# ADMINISTRATIVE INCONSISTENCIES

## Facility Funds

- Use of the form
  - at all
  - the correct form
- Meeting monthly with inmate representatives

## Global Fund

- Global Fund request submission timeframe
- Transportation assistance from Global Fund or other funding

# OTHER STATES

| State        | Specificity of Use of the Fund in Policy | Formal Input from Offenders | Oversight Group | Fund Used for Indigent Kits | Recoup Cost for Indigent Items |
|--------------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Montana      | Moderate                                 | ✓                           | ✓               | ✓                           |                                |
| Idaho        | Low                                      |                             |                 | ✓                           |                                |
| North Dakota | Low                                      |                             |                 |                             |                                |
| Washington   | High                                     | ✓                           | ✓               |                             | ✓                              |
| Wyoming      | Moderate                                 |                             |                 | ✓                           | ✓                              |

# RECOMMENDATION

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**Revise & implement department policy to:**

- A. Add **clarity** on what is an appropriate IWF expense,
- B. Remove **indigent items** from allowable IWF expenses, and
- C. Reflect **current practice & expectations** for processing IWF.

Department response: **Concur**