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### **Commissioner Perry Phelps Announces Plans to Retire July 15<sup>th</sup>**

After 31 years of dedicated service to the State of Delaware, Department of Correction (DOC) Commissioner Perry Phelps announced he will retire effective July 15, 2019.

Commissioner Phelps began his career with DOC in 1988 and was first assigned to the Multi-Purpose Criminal Justice Facility, now known as Howard R. Young Correctional Institution in Wilmington. He has served the State of Delaware in the capacity of Correctional Officer, Sergeant, Lieutenant, Security Superintendent, Deputy Warden, Warden, Bureau Chief of Prisons and Deputy Commissioner. From 2005-2006, Mr. Phelps worked for the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families as the Deputy Director and Director of the Division of Services. Governor Carney nominated him as Commissioner on December 13, 2016 and he was confirmed by the Delaware Senate on January 18, 2017.

Following the tragic death of Lieutenant Steven Floyd during the riot at James T. Vaughn Correctional Center in Smyrna, Commissioner Phelps, with backing from Governor John Carney and members of the General Assembly, was successful in leading the DOC's 2,500 employees into 21<sup>st</sup> century corrections. His achievements include significant investments and advancements in technology and security equipment, the addition of countless educational opportunities for all staff, additional programs and job training for inmates, and the creation of a Residential Treatment Unit for inmates with a mental health diagnosis. With support from his senior leadership and union representatives, Commissioner Phelps is responsible for the implementation of the career ladder for correctional staff, the substantial decrease in forced overtime, and an increased level of professionalism among the ranks.

"When I joined the Department of Correction, I only expected to stay for two years. I thought I would use my experience as a stepping stone for another career. I discovered that DOC was a phenomenal place to fulfill my passion for public service and am fortunate to have met extraordinary mentors, peers and supporters throughout the criminal justice system who empowered me to work my way through the ranks to become Commissioner," said Mr. Phelps. "Serving in this role has been challenging and rewarding, but I consider it an honor and privilege. I will miss my DOC Family, but am very much looking forward to spending more time with my wife, children, and grandchildren."

"Commissioner Phelps has served our state for more than three decades at the Department of Correction, working his way up from a correctional officer position to the Commissioner's office," said Governor John Carney. "He has led us through one of the toughest times in the Department's history. On behalf of all Delawareans, I want to thank Commissioner Phelps for his service to our state, and his

willingness to commit to the tough work at the Department of Correction. Going forward, we will remain committed to our work of making our prison facilities safer for officers and for inmates, including the work led by Commissioner Phelps and his team to help inmates successfully re-enter their communities and reduce our prison population over time.”

**-End-**