



MEDIA ADVISORY

Arizona State Legislature
Representative Quang Nguyen (R-1)
Senator Kevin Payne (R-27)

1700 West Washington • Phoenix, Arizona • 85007

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Joint Study Committee on Correctional Practices and Facility Safety to Hold Hearing on Inmate Deaths in State Prisons

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – The Joint Ad Hoc Study Committee on Correctional Practices and Facility Safety will hold a public hearing on [Tuesday, August 26, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.](#) in House Hearing Room 1 at the State Capitol.

The Committee is tasked with investigating recent inmate deaths in Arizona’s prison system and reviewing Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry (ADCRR) policies on inmate classification, facility safety, and institutional accountability.

Through a series of hearings, members will hear testimony from former staff, subject-matter experts, and other stakeholders to determine whether existing protocols adequately protect both staff and inmates—particularly in cases involving high-risk offenders. A primary focus will be the growing number of custody-level overrides, including the reassignment of maximum-custody inmates into lower-security facilities despite documented violent histories or known threats.

The Committee will review the procedures and justifications for these overrides, their effect on staff safety, and whether staffing and security measures are sufficient. Members will also examine patterns of administrative decision-making, transparency, and internal responses following inmate deaths.

For Tuesday’s hearing, Committee Co-Chairs Representative Quang Nguyen (R-1) and Senator Kevin Payne (R-27) have requested ADCRR Director Ryan Thornell to appear before the Committee to provide testimony and answer questions.

The meeting is open to the public and will be livestreamed at:
<https://www.azleg.gov/videoplayer/?clientID=6361162879&eventID=2025081002>.

Committee members include Representatives Laurin Hendrix (R-14), Neal Carter (R-15), Alma Hernandez (D-20), and Senators Hildy Angius (R-30), Mitzi Epstein (D-12), and David Gowan (R-19).

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