



MECKLENBURG COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

700 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

T (704) 336-2543 • F (704) 336-6118

WWW.MECKSHERIFF.COM

GARRY L. MCFADDEN
SHERIFF

CELESTE D. YOUNGBLOOD
CHIEF OF DETENTION

VALERIE M. FIELDS
CHIEF OF STAFF

SHELBY JONES
EXECUTIVE SUPPORT DIRECTOR

MEDIA ALERT

Dec. 9, 2025

CONTACT: Mari Pressley
MCISO Public Information Office
Mari.Pressley@mecklenburgcountync.gov
O: (980) 314-5029

Sheriff McFadden and Mecklenburg County Detention Center-Central Staff Express Concerns with Impact of House Bill 307

(Charlotte, N.C.) – Sheriff McFadden raised concerns, during Monday's press conference, regarding the challenges posed by the newly enacted House Bill 307, also known as Iryna's Law. This legislation, while aimed at preventing tragedies like the one experienced by Iryna Zarutskya, presents significant operational challenges for detention centers.

Sheriff McFadden voiced concerns about the law's impact, noting that while Iryna's Law is well-intentioned, it does not provide additional funding to manage the subsequent rise in workloads at detention centers. "House Bill 307 did not bring us any resources, and they did not bring any funding," Sheriff McFadden stated.

Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office (MCISO) expects a surge in its detention center population due to stricter release policies, affecting individuals with minor charges. Also, during the press conference, Major A. Durrah, Facility Commander over the Mecklenburg County Detention Center, highlighted the operational strain. He raised concerns regarding safety, funding, and the well-being of both staff and residents. Major A. Durrah emphasized that overcrowding reduces efficiency and raises the risk of incidents, making it harder to maintain order.

Major R. Abee, head of Arrest Processing, pointed out that these anticipated delays in Arrest Processing could hinder time-sensitive cases such as Driving While Impaired (DWI) cases. There will be fewer defendants released by the magistrates, increasing Arrest Processing's workload. Major R. Abee said, "This is going to be a negative impact on our Sheriff's Office. I also think there will be negative impacts on other agencies, ... especially those ones that are smaller."

Tanisha Pakanayeva, Mental Health Director, addressed the mental health department's challenges, including a potential detention population increase as a result of implementations from HB307. It is foreseeable that the Mecklenburg County Detention Center's (MCDCC) mental health department will be impacted in the following ways, including: an uptick in the number of assessments to be completed, possible increase in the number of individuals in crisis, greater demands on staff due to increased caseloads, and back log/delays to current timelines. "Of greatest concern for our department is how we will manage individuals who come into the facility and are not able to engage with our on-site treatment team in a meaningful way," Pakanayeva said.

As MCDCC is reliant on the involuntary commitment process to support and service residents, our community hospitals are often limited with bedspace and do not have the ability to house and treat individuals with violent histories and charges. "That's already a challenge. I can only imagine with larger numbers here, how that challenge is going to grow," Pakanayeva said.

Sheriff McFadden concluded with a call to action, "Communication, collaboration, and cooperation is all that we are asking," He went on to say, "We will take on this challenge. But, simply having us to talk or hear our voice at the table would have been better."

The Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office reaffirms its commitment to collaborating with community partners and state leaders to tackle these challenges and enhance public safety.

###