

<http://www.MSCNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=39409>

Nebraska Lawmakers Looking at More Prison Oversight

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - Nebraska lawmakers are looking at ways to increase oversight of the state's troubled prison system, including creation of an independent watchdog position or by having the department answer to the Legislature.

The Department of Correctional Services came under fire after lawmakers learned state officials failed to follow two Nebraska Supreme Court rulings that explained how to determine prison sentences.

Senator Heath Mello of Omaha says lawmakers may create an independent inspector general to oversee the department once lawmakers convene in January.

Senator Brad Ashford of Omaha, who is leaving office because of term limits, says he's drafting legislation to create an oversight commission for the department. Ashford is calling for a special session, although Gov. Dave Heineman and many lawmakers say one isn't necessary.

Associated Press