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Dear friends –

I come to you with a serious problem that is affecting all of our communities in Iberville, West Baton Rouge and Pointe Coupee. Juvenile crime, and particularly violent crime by juveniles, is out of control.

The safety of our families is my primary concern, and I know it is your concern too. The bottom line is that we have NO facility to get a violent juvenile offenders off our streets.

There is no place to send them, so we end up putting ankle monitors on them and sending them home. They know this, so they aren't worried about the consequences of their actions. We are fighting this crime with our hands behind our backs because we have such limited options to handle these juvenile offenders.

Perhaps you have heard that I am actively working toward the establishment of a juvenile detention facility where we can hold and educate these young people, and give them the programs and counseling to become productive adults. We can't expect young people to change when they get arrested, and then go back to the same bad influences and situations they were in before. We have to get them away from those influences, confine them so they see the consequences of their actions, and give them the programs to help them turn their lives around.

This facility will not be cheap to build or to operate, but if we do not address this problem it will become much worse, devastating our families and communities. We believe we can get state and federal help in the construction of such a facility, but the operational costs are high because many professionals – in education, in counseling, in medical care and more – will be needed.

I will bring a plan to you in the near future and to ask for your help with this problem. But for now, please don't have a blind eye to the juvenile crime happening daily. Help law enforcement in your community, help us in this sad battle. Meanwhile, I promise you I will prosecute those who commit crimes in our communities, and I will continue to work hard every day to address this problem.


Tony Clayton
District Attorney