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## Gov. Murphy Appoints New Board Member to Guide Prison Oversight Office

TRENTON, New Jersey – Today, the [New Jersey Office of the Corrections Ombudsman](#) announced that Governor Phil Murphy has appointed Boris Franklin to fill a vacancy on the Office’s Advisory Board. Established in the [Dignity Act](#) (P.L. 2019, c. 288), which Murphy signed in January 2020, the Advisory Board offers support and guidance to the Corrections Ombudsman Office as it carries out its duties related to inspecting state prison facilities and monitoring conditions impacting the health and safety of incarcerated people.

Mr. Franklin has lived experience with incarceration, and since his return home, has engaged in high-impact community organizing, mentoring, and investment in young people and adults in urban centers across New Jersey. As a lead community organizer for [New Jersey Together](#), Franklin mobilizes residents on policy matters related to poverty and criminal justice. He has supported young people with alternatives to out-of-home placements as an advocate with New Jersey Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. He has been a work readiness skills instructor with Rutgers University’s T.E.E.M. Gateway programs. He also sits on the Board of the New Jersey Reentry Program, which supports individuals who pursued college education while in prison—as Mr. Franklin himself did—and who aim to continue their education upon release.

Mr. Franklin is also a notable writer and performer. In 2009, he published a book of poetry, and in 2017 he and several other contributing authors published “Caged,” a play exploring the experience of incarceration. Franklin also performed in the play in its 2018 production at the Passage Theatre in Trenton.

As an Advisory Board member for the Office of the Corrections Ombudsman, Franklin will provide strategic advice and guidance to the Office’s leadership, help set performance goals, preview data and public reports from the Office, and offer subject matter expertise and insight to the Office’s work and priorities.

“I am enormously impressed with Boris’s depth and capacity to connect with people,” said Terry Schuster, New Jersey’s Corrections Ombudsperson. “I have left each conversation with him feeling enlightened and motivated, and I believe he’s an outstanding pick for this Board position.”

“I want to thank Governor Murphy for this appointment,” said Mr. Franklin. “As a community organizer and person who spent 11-plus years in state custody, I commit to guiding the Corrections Ombudsperson Office toward meaningful and regular community engagement both inside and outside the prison walls.”

The Advisory Board consists of nine members, with the Governor, Speaker, and Senate president each appointing three members. Franklin’s appointment takes effect immediately.

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