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## SENATOR HEATHER CLOUD STRIVES FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN THE OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

**State Senator Cloud, Along with State Representative Daryl Deshotel,  
Tour The Acadiana Center For Youth In Bunkie, Louisiana.**

**April 16, 20201** - Senator Heather Cloud (R-Turkey Creek), along with Representative Daryl Deshotel (R-Marksville), toured the Acadiana Center for Youth this morning, April 16, 2021, to personally check out its operations.

While there, they met with William Sommers, Deputy Secretary of the Office of Juvenile Justice, to examine the situation on-site and discuss plans for improvement. The center is located within Senate District 28 in Bunkie, LA.

“My office has been receiving a high volume of calls regarding this facility. I wanted, and needed, to see first-hand what is going on there and hopefully observe the beginning stages of a turnaround,” said Senator Cloud. “I like what I am hearing from Mr. Sommers, however, time is of the essence and youth lives, as well as facility staff, are at stake.

“I have received multiple reports of abused staff, escaped youth, fights, and other altercations within the facility and am extremely concerned that the resources we are providing are not being fully utilized,” she said. “Our state is spending thousands of dollars

to educate and train these youth so they can re-enter society with the skills and knowledge needed to hopefully get a job or go back to school.”

Senator Cloud said she is also making it a priority to get tracking information from the Department of Juvenile Justice to ensure that incidents at the center are being reported and whether or not improvements are actually taking place.

“We will be checking in on this facility monthly and I have requested data and information so that when we check in we will know if, and exactly when, improvements have been made,” said Senator Cloud. “My constituents are very concerned, and as their Senator, I am going to stay on top of this and keep them apprised of the situation and of the progress being made.”

The Acadiana Center for Youth opened in March 2019 and is a state-of-the-art secure therapeutic treatment center for youth. The campus includes nine buildings and can house up to 72 youth requiring intensive therapeutic treatment. It sits on 20 acres of land located just off U.S. Hwy 71 at Bordelon Road in Bunkie, La.

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