



## RUO/CMUO CLASSIFICATION ABOLISHMENT HAS ITS DAY IN COURT

At a court hearing Wednesday, Feb. 17 on the RUO and CMUO classifications abolishment, the Honorable William Collette criticized the Michigan Civil Service Commission (MCSC) and state lawmakers, who he said seem insistent on cutting wages and undermining long-standing authority.

Attorney Jason Hawkins, representing the state, said MDOC staff had been improperly classified for more than 30 years before the classifications were abolished. RUOs were really performing the work of corrections officers, he said. Judge Collette wasn't buying it, saying MCSC "finds a way to justify everything it's done."

A classification study, conducted in 2012 after the abolishments, found

wide discrepancy in how former RUOs answered a question about whether treatment was part of the RUO job. MCO's outside legal counsel, Mary Ellen Gurewitz, said the word treatment wasn't defined, and that caused confusion.

RUOs were in fact part of an overall treatment team that focused on rehabilitating inmates, Gurewitz said. She pointed out that one former RUO, in her testimony from 2012, said an RUO was actually a corrections officer, supervisor, an army sergeant, and a parent in one.

Gurewitz noted that in 2006, MCSC conducted one of its many periodic audits of the RUO classification and again found it was appropriate.

The real reason MCSC and MDOC abolished this classification was to save

money. The former MDOC director said RUO wages were too high, and this was one way to change that, Gurewitz said.

"Do you think they freed up enough money to pay for the legislature's new building? ... They're cutting everybody in order to give themselves more, that's all it is," Judge Collette said.

Just to be clear, no ruling was made Wednesday. Judge Collette will render a decision in writing. It's likely that the side that doesn't prevail will appeal the case to the Michigan Court of Appeals.

MCO has been fighting the classifications' abolishment since 2012.

**For photos from the hearing and information on MCO's RUO fight over the years, go to our website, [mco-seiu.org](http://mco-seiu.org).**

## AROUND THE STATE: PROBATIONARY COs FIND CONTRABAND

**A probationary officer at Parnall has found lots of contraband over the last few months.**

CO Hildreth found almost five gallons of spud juice Feb. 7, after finding 21 bottles of it just a month ago. He's also found five shanks and tobacco in his short eight months as a corrections officer. Way to be vigilant!

**Two probationary officers at Central Michigan found contraband last week.**

On Feb. 9, Officer Campbell found a tattoo gun and needles in J unit. The next day, he and Officer Volk found two shanks and spud juice also in J unit. They were in a hole in a wall, concealed with cardboard that was painted white.

Great work, officers!

These officers' coworkers reported their finds to MCO. **If you'd like to brag on your fellow officers, or tell us about contraband you found, email [mail@mco-seiu.org](mailto:mail@mco-seiu.org).**

## IN MEMORIAM: LAVAN LONG AND SEAN ROBINSON

**Macomb Officer Sean Robinson passed away Feb. 13.**

Robinson had been an officer since 2000. Several members say Robinson was a great officer and a great friend.

A viewing is scheduled for 5-7 p.m. today at the Kaul Funeral Home, 27830 Gratiot Ave., Roseville, MI 48066.

Another viewing will be at 10 a.m. tomorrow at Evangel Christian Church, 28491 Utica Rd., Roseville, MI 48066. The funeral will follow at 11 a.m. at the same location.

**DRC Officer Lavan Long also passed away Feb. 13.**

A viewing will be 12 p.m. - 4 p.m. Sunday at Cobb-Swanson Funeral Home, 151 Orchard Lake Rd., Pontiac, MI 48341.

Long's funeral will be at 11 a.m. Monday at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, 512 Pearsall Ave., Pontiac, MI 48341.

Please join us in praying for both officers' family, friends, and coworkers. Rest in peace, Officer Robinson and Officer Long.

## REMINDER: SEIU SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE IS MARCH 3

Don't forget, SEIU scholarship applications are due March 3.

Children of MCO members can apply for the SEIU scholarship program.

MCO also has its own

scholarship program for children of members. The deadline for MCO's scholarship is in June.

More information on both scholarships is available at [mco-seiu.org](http://mco-seiu.org).

## CORRECTION

The Feb. 12 KYI contained an error.

The correct information is that Jeff Vanderkoooy, one of the Officer of the Year finalists, has eight years with the MDOC.