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*News Release*

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## **THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES ANNOUNCES INTENT TO ACQUIRE PROPERTY IN WALDORF FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A REGIONAL JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER**

Baltimore, MD (July 13, 2012) – After a 2-year search throughout Anne Arundel, Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's Counties and after holding several public meetings regarding potential properties, the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) shall begin the process to acquire the property located in the Acton Lane Industrial Park in Waldorf, Maryland. The next steps will be to negotiate the purchase of the site and, if the purchase is successful and the property is acquired, seek approval of the contract from the Board of Public Works. If the property is acquired, then the proposed Southern Regional Children's Center (SRCC) will be constructed at that location. The SRCC will primarily serve youth in the juvenile justice system from Anne Arundel, Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's Counties.

The SRCC will be a modern 80,000 square foot facility that will provide educational, medical, behavioral health, dietary and recreational services for up to 48 male youth in a self-contained building with state-of-the-art security features. It is projected to cost \$52 million and expected to become operational in late 2016.

An economic impact report by the Department of Business and Economic Development found that the design and construction of the SRCC will generate \$72 million for Charles County and surrounding counties, and beginning in 2017, the SRCC's operations will generate \$61 million per year for Charles County and surrounding counties. The economic impact report also found that at the peak of construction, the project will create an estimated 119 new jobs for the local economy and almost 300 new jobs once the facility becomes operational.

The economic impact report is attached as an Exhibit to DJS's Report to the Joint Budget Committees of the Maryland General Assembly. The Report, which was required by law and filed earlier today, details the site selection process and criteria for the proposed SRCC. The Report on the Site Selection Process for the SRCC and Exhibits may be downloaded at: <http://www.djs.state.md.us/publications.html>.

The process of identifying an appropriate site for the proposed juvenile detention center has been a top priority for the agency. Maryland law requires that every operating region have a secure juvenile detention facility. Maryland Annotated Code, Human Services § 9-238.1(b)(1). Of the 6 DJS operating regions in Maryland, only the Southern Region does not have its own secure juvenile detention facility for male youth. At the present time, male youth from the Southern Region who require secure detention are primarily residing at the Cheltenham Youth Facility in Prince George's County.

"After an exhaustive 2-year search where DJS evaluated 121 potential properties, we have decided to move forward with the Acton Lane site as the location that comprehensively meets the agency's requirements to build and operate a safe and secure juvenile facility," said Secretary Abed. "The location of the Acton Lane site will give DJS ready access to local courts, resources, services and potential employees, all of which are crucial to operating a successful juvenile facility," he stated.

The address of the property is 2510 Aurora Place Waldorf, Maryland 20601. The site is 18 total acres with 12 acres of buildable land and 6 acres to be used as a buffer along the property lines.

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