

Press Release

State of Maryland
Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services



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Media Invited to Celebrate Flag Day at Prison Sew Plant

TOWSON, MD (June 10, 2011) – For more than 70 years, Maryland’s inmates have been sewing flags to fly above public buildings, with seven inmates making about 700 flags a year to sell to state agencies and nonprofits. In a rare twist honoring Maryland’s history, the inmates at Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCI-W) in Jessup, MD are now sewing some flags in the 1812 style: 15 stars and 15 bars (stripes).

The largest of the reproduction “War of 1812” flags – a flag that measures 10 feet by 12 feet – will be on display at the MCI-W Maryland Correctional Enterprises sew plant on June 14, 2011. *Members of the media are invited to attend for a brief tour and interviews beginning at 10 a.m. Please RSVP to Erin Julius, listed above, by June 13.*

Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE) is the industry arm of the Division of Correction with more than 30 plants behind the fence that not only employ offenders to reduce idleness, but mirror private industry to give [work experience](#) that can help offender succeed upon release. During FY10 MCE had record employment levels and remained one of the top correctional industries in the nation in terms of sales.

The original “Star Spangled Banner” was made in Baltimore, and inspired Francis Scott Key to write the National Anthem. It’s now on display at a Smithsonian museum in Washington, D.C.

For those who can’t make it to the nation’s capital to see the original, Maryland’s public buildings will be flying reproductions – all sewn by MCE employees – for the next few years as part of the state’s War of 1812 bicentennial celebration. The original was raised over Fort McHenry the morning of Sept. 14, 1814, and signaled the American victory over the British in the Battle of Baltimore, according to a Smithsonian account. Watching the flag inspired Key to write “The Star Spangled Banner.”

While the 1812 bicentennial years have not yet begun, the 1812 flags have already been sold to state prisons, the Department of Agriculture, Maryland Public Television, Department of General Services and other state agencies.

The Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services protects the public,
its employees and the detainees and offenders under its supervision.

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