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FALLEN HERO — An honor guard salutes Maryland CO David McGuinn at a service before 2,000 mourners.

AP Photo/Press of Atlantic City, Danny Drake

Maryland CO Makes Ultimate Sacrifice



Maryland CO
David McGuinn

JESSUP, MARYLAND

David McGuinn, a member of Local 1678 (Council 92), worked at the maximum-security Maryland House of Correction in Jessup. He was attacked July 25 by two inmates while conducting a routine prisoner head count at the facility. Prosecutors said they will seek the death penalty for both suspects.

McGuinn was the first corrections officer to be murdered inside a Maryland prison since 1984 and the state's second to be killed last year. The first was CO Jeffery Wroten, 44, who was shot with his own gun in January of last year.

The 42-year-old McGuinn's death might have been prevented. Council 92 had long warned the administration of now former Gov. Robert Ehrlich Jr. (R) that its efforts to reduce staffing levels would be detrimental. The union also complained of poor training and inadequate safety equipment. The state's own Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services reported that the rate of

assaults on its COs had nearly doubled from 2004 to 2005, from about 3.5 to about 6.5 per 100 inmates. Yet, at the time of McGuinn's slaying, 47 CO positions remained unfilled at Jessup, which is 100 years old.

Since then, the state has begun to make changes. Officials transferred the most dangerous inmates to other facilities and converted the institution to a minimum-security prison. John A. Rowley, acting commissioner of the Division of Correction, announced a \$5 million initiative to improve surveillance, buy new protective gear and hire more officers. There is also a new warden at the Jessup facility, and top prison management met with Council 92 in recent months to discuss ways to improve prison safety.

More changes are likely now that Maryland has a new governor. Democrat Martin O'Malley, who was endorsed by Council 92, declared during his campaign, "We have to hire more officers and pay them more." In addition, he committed to re-instituting labor/management meetings that allow officers to communicate their concerns directly with management. That practice was halted under the Ehrlich administration.

Delegates to AFSCME's 37th International Convention in Chicago last August held a tribute to McGuinn, raising more than \$7,000 for his family. **PE**

BY CLYDE WEISS

McGuinn photo courtesy Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services