



## Heineman vows action after prisoners wrongly freed

LINCOLN (AP) — Gov. Dave Heineman vowed Wednesday to hold accountable state officials who miscalculated prison sentences that led to the early release of some violent prisoners.

Heineman said the Department of Correctional Services miscalculated the sentences. He said that he would follow the advice of the Nebraska Attorney General's office on how the state should proceed, and whether inmates who were freed should be returned.

"I'm very unhappy about what occurred," Heineman said at a news conference. "I intend to hold those who were responsible accountable."

His comments came after an Omaha-World Herald investigation published Sunday revealed that prison officials didn't correctly calculate sentences, and released, or were set to release, some inmates before their prison terms should have ended. The newspaper found that sentences were miscalculated for at least 101 inmates, providing breaks that ranged from six months to 15 years.

At least 50 of those prisoners have already been released, and at least two of them — a drug dealer and a robber — are back in custody for new crimes. Another inmate, Marvin Buggs, was wrongly scheduled for release in June 2016 for a manslaughter conviction in the strangling death of a woman. His actual release date should have been June 2021.

Department of Correctional Services Director Michael Kenney was ordered not to release any more prisoners until every sentence is recalculated and checked three times. The Attorney General's office is looking into how to proceed.

The prison debacle came as top officials from all three branches of Nebraska government began to look at ways to reduce prison overcrowding and costs, while maintaining public safety.

The review by Nebraska officials and the Council of State Governments Justice Center will examine alternatives to keeping non-violent

inmates behind bars, such as expanded probation and drug courts. The Council of State Governments is a nonpartisan group that conducts research for local, state and federal governments.