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MDOC Commissioner honored by Jackson Councilman

JACKSON – Jackson Ward 3 Councilman Kenneth Stokes honored MDOC Commissioner Burl Cain last weekend for his leadership.

The longtime councilman presented Commissioner Cain with a plaque at the M.W. King Hiram Grand Lodge on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, recognizing him as a “resilient leader” and in advance of Father’s Day.

Addressing constituents and fellow honorees, including Jackson attorney Dennis Sweet, Stokes praised Commissioner Cain for his commitment to building churches and for being accessible to families with loved ones incarcerated. He added that when mothers come to him for help, he, in turn, seeks assistance from the Commissioner.

In accepting the award, Commissioner Cain said his administration aims to change people’s lives rather than focus solely on punishment. To achieve this goal, he cited several initiatives the department is pursuing, including educational and vocational programs that recently resulted in the awarding of 761 certificates, the planned opening of another barber school and a new nail salon, and opportunities for men and women attending theological seminary to earn degrees.

He also emphasized his belief in giving convicted felons a second chance, including by hiring them. Several are prison chaplains. “How can I ask you to hire somebody if I don’t hire them myself?” he said.

And he mentioned the challenge of keeping drugs out.

After the event, Commissioner Cain said he appreciates Councilman Stokes' care and concern for his community and will cherish receiving a Stokes hat from him a couple of years ago.

