



February 18th 2025

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of the State of New York
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Daniel F. Martuscello III
Commissioner, NYS Department of Corrections and Supervision
1220 Washington Ave.
Albany, NY 12226

Dear Governor Hochul and Commissioner Martuscello,

We write to you today to make an appeal on behalf of our Correctional Officers statewide for meaningful dialogue aimed at resolving growing concerns over the safety and stability of our correctional facilities. Measures taken to improve these areas have continued to fail, rendering all individuals within them at significant risk for danger.

While we recognize that New York State has seen a significant decline in prison populations over the last two decades, the level of risk, violence, and overall quality of the workplace environment of our Correctional Officer and civilian staff inside prison facilities has not seen the same decline. In fact, New York has seen historic increases of violence for both inmate-on-inmate and inmate-on-officer populations. Last year, an estimated 1,760 violent incidents were perpetrated on staff, eclipsing the record number of incidents set a year prior and still not as high as inmate-on-inmate violence. Compounded with the high rates of contraband along with increased illicit drug use and overdoses among inmates coupled once more with drug-induced contact injuries inflicted on our CO's has further eroded what needs to be an orderly, stable, and safe environment. It is increasingly irrefutable that, whether it be obsolete long-standing practices or unintended consequences of recently enacted legislative actions such as the HALT Act, there has been a fundamental institutional breakdown rendering a critical element of our broader public safety institution ineffective and unsafe.

We believe it to be a shared priority held by both senders and recipients of this appeal that New York State delivers and maintains an atmosphere of safety and dignity for all involved with the corrections and community supervision process. However, it is also critical that we share in a recognition that those who have been tasked with maintaining this environment continue to voice a growing concern that their safety and dignity is increasingly at risk within an environment that continues to devolve to a precarious state. What's more is that these calls for positive resolution have been unsatisfactorily met.

Whether through promulgation of rules within DOCCS, use of 30-Day amendments in the Executive Budget Proposal, or other timely legal remedies, urgent action is necessary. Our goal for lasting solutions ought to rest on a foundation that delivering the sense amongst our CO community that indeed our priorities as a State very much include their safety and well-being. To this end, unfortunately, that goal has not been met and therefore much work remains to be done.

NEW YORK
STATE
LEGISLATURE



ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew J. Simpson".

Rep. Matthew J. Simpson
114th Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jake Ashby".

Rep. Jake Ashby
43rd Senate District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James N. Tedisco".

Rep. James N. Tedisco
44th Senate District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Walczyk".

Rep. Mark Walczyk
49th Senate District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph C. DeStefano".

Rep. Joseph C. DeStefano
3rd Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Durso".

Rep. Michael Durso
9th Assembly District

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John K. Mikulin".

Rep. John K. Mikulin
17th Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Slater".

Rep. Matthew Slater
94th Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Tague".

Rep. Chris Tague
102nd Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott A. Gray".

Rep. Scott A. Gray
116th Assembly District

NEW YORK
STATE
LEGISLATURE



ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Blankenbush".

Rep. Ken Blankenbush
117th Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert J. Smullen".

Rep. Robert J. Smullen
118th Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Angelino".

Rep. Joseph Angelino
121st Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian D. Miller".

Rep. Brian D. Miller
122nd Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Lemondes".

Rep. John Lemondes
126th Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian D. Manktelow".

Rep. Brian D. Manktelow
130th Assembly District

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Hawley".

Rep. Steve Hawley
139th Assembly District