



**New York State Correctional Officers
& Police Benevolent Association, Inc.**

"Keeping New York Safe"

NYSCOPBA calls on NYS Legislature to Address Significant Rise in Prison Violence and Repeal HALT

Violence in facilities exploding since implementation of HALT

*Violent attacks on staff by incarcerated individuals is on pace to surpass last year's
yearly record-setting total*

For Immediate Release

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Albany, NY – The New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc. (NYSCOPBA) calls on the New York State Legislature to immediately address the sharp rise in violence in prisons as attacks on staff and other incarcerated individuals has risen significantly since the Humane Alternatives for Long Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Act was fully implemented in all state-run correctional facilities.

NYSCOPBA President Michael Powers said: "We've been warning the State for years that the implementation of HALT would do nothing to better the lives of individuals who reside in prisons and would only make our facilities more dangerous. We pleaded with the Legislature to pass our prison violence study legislation before implementing HALT, and those cries fell on deaf ears. In the two weeks since HALT's full implementation, attacks have significantly increased and now this year is on track to be the most violent in our prisons in New York State history. The individuals who created this poorly thought-out legislation need to make immediate modifications to the HALT Act to address this rise in violence they so carelessly caused."

At this pace, according to numbers reported by the New York State Department of Correction and Community Supervision, by year's end, both inmate-on-staff assaults and inmate-on-inmate assaults will surpass their respective single year records.

"The numbers support what we've been saying for years. Any reduction in disciplinary penalties within our facilities only leads to more violence," **President Powers said.** "HALT hinders the ability to separate vicious predators from the general prison population for more than fifteen days, which simply isn't enough of a deterrent. Bad individuals who mean to do harm to others are

seizing this opportunity and unfortunately, our officers who take an oath to maintain care, custody and control of these facilities have been put in harm's way. Shame on the New York State Legislature for ignoring the decade of rising violence in our facilities which is backed by factual data, and instead crafted legislation based off emotion."

Just in the past few weeks, there have been numerous incidents across New York State where multiple correctional officers were injured and hospitalized at the hands of incarcerated individuals in both maximum and medium-security settings.

- Nine officers were injured after a series of attacks in Upstate Correctional Facility, Clinton Correctional Facility and Great Meadow Correctional Facility.
- Three officers were injured in an attack at Upstate Correctional, including one officer who needed to be transported to a nearby hospital.
- Five officers were transported to the hospital after two separate attacks at Lakeview Shock Incarceration Facility.
- A civilian staff member was injured when an inmate attempted to stab her in the neck with a pen at Mohawk Correctional Facility
- Twelve officers sustained injuries after multiple incidents over a two-day span involving inmate fights and unprovoked attacks at Orleans Correctional Facility
- An inmate slashed an officer across his face in an unprovoked attack at Cape Vincent Correctional Facility.
- An officer was attacked and punched repeatedly in the head by an inmate at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility.
- A female officer was transported to a local hospital after being attacked by an inmate who refused to get off the phone at Marcy Correctional Facility.

In May 2021, NYSCOPBA filed a federal lawsuit against New York State to overturn HALT, arguing that the new law violates its members' civil rights. That lawsuit is still pending.