



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

“Keeping New York Safe”

NYSCOPBA launches public awareness campaign calling on the NYS Legislature to Repeal HALT

Violence in facilities continues to rise since the implementation of the HALT Act

*Recent State Data Indicates Single Week Highs of both Inmate-on-Staff Assaults
and Inmate-on-Inmate Assaults Recorded*

*Public Awareness Campaign is the Latest Effort by the Union to Combat the HALT
Act*

Albany, NY – The New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc. (NYSCOPBA) is launching a public awareness campaign utilizing its various social media platforms calling on the New York State Legislature to immediately repeal the Humane Alternatives for Long Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Act which was recently implemented in all state-run correctional facilities. The HALT Act severely limits, or in some cases eliminates, the ability to place incarcerated individuals in Special Housing Units separated from the general population.

NYSCOPBA President Michael Powers said: “As we have said for years, the HALT Act would only do one thing, make our correctional facilities more dangerous. The New York State Legislature, the people who created this poorly thought-out legislation are directly responsible for the skyrocketing violence we’re experiencing in our prisons today. They ignored our warnings, our pleas to educate themselves properly before passing HALT, and now they’ve put the lives of everyone who resides or works in a correctional setting at risk.”

According to numbers reported by the New York State Department of Correction and Community Supervision, since April 1, 2022, overall violence in New York State correctional facilities has risen over 30%. Inmate-on-staff violence has increased approximately 25%, while inmate-on-inmate

violence has climbed 40%. According to the data, the single-week high of inmate-on-staff assaults was set during the week of May 1, 2022, as 37 staff members were assaulted. The weekly average number of staff members assaulted in 2022 prior to the implementation of the HALT Act is 22. Additionally, the single-week high of inmate-on-inmate assaults was set the prior week, the week of April 24th, 2022, as 37 inmates were assaulted by other incarcerated individuals. The weekly average number of inmates assaulted by other inmates in 2022 prior to the implementation of the HALT Act is 23.

“Conditions inside our prisons are worsening by the day. Staff members are being assaulted at a record pace, inmates are settling longtime scores with other inmates by utilizing dangerous weapons, and our officers are being put directly in harm’s way,” **President Powers said.** “If the goal of HALT was to improve the mental health and well-being of the incarcerated community, this couldn’t be what the Legislature had in mind. Unless the violence is addressed immediately, someone is going to be killed. We can’t allow that to happen which is why we’re launching our Repeal HALT campaign, so that we can raise awareness in the public of the crisis at hand in our correctional facilities. Simply put, ignoring the rise in violence is not an option.”

The Repeal HALT campaign will be a comprehensive approach to raise awareness in the general public of the dangerous working and living conditions inside New York State’s correctional facilities by utilizing NYSCOPBA’s various social media platforms. There the public will be able to view short videos urging the NYS Legislature to address prison violence, access press releases on severe incidents of prison violence across New York State and be easily connected to various media coverage of violence in correctional facilities.

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.