



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

"Keeping New York Safe"

Female NYS Correction Officers Demand Legislative Action to Protect Them from Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assaults in NYS Prisons

Since the Enactment of the HALT Act in April 2022, the Frequency and Severity of Sexually Charged Incidents by Inmates Against Staff has Significantly Increased

Violent Assaults Against Staff Has Increased Nearly 30% since HALT

Over 15% of NYSCOPBA's 16,000 Active Membership are Women Correction Officers

Albany, NY – A large contingent of female New York State Correction Officers stood alongside The New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc. (NYSCOPBA) Executive Leadership Team and dozens of New York State Legislators to demand action to protect staff from sexually charged incidents by the incarcerated community. These types of actions, like sexual assaults, sexual harassment and lewd misconduct continue to rise in the wake of the implementation of the HALT Act, which was implemented in all state prisons on April 1, 2022. 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. State data shows the rate of assaults in prisons have skyrocketed since the law was implemented. Furthermore, the frequency and severity of sexually based incidents of misconduct involving women corrections officers have also increased.

NYSCOPBA President Michael Powers said: "The HALT Act has done irreparable harm to the hard-working men and women who work inside our facilities and has also emboldened inmates who look for opportunities to prey on others as there are now no meaningful consequences for their actions. In the first year of HALT, the inmates' emboldened actions towards female staff are reprehensible and should not be tolerated in any walk of life. Since HALT, inmates hurl sexually charged obscenities towards female staff more frequently, inmates stalk our female officers as their next sexual target, and in some cases act out by assaulting women CO's in a sexual manner. Our female staff should not be subjected to this type of behavior in a state-run workplace, just as it is not tolerated in any walk of life. Unfortunately, the State turns a blind eye to this and the record-breaking violence data and instead try to place blame on anyone but themselves."

According to statistics maintained by the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS), in the twelve months that followed the enactment of the HALT Act on April 1, 2022, there were 3,113 total assaults recorded in New York's correctional facilities. That number dwarfs the twelve months prior to HALT's enactment where 2,375 assaults were recorded, almost a 33% jump in overall violence. As previously reported, publicly posted state data shows a record number of inmate-on-staff and inmate-on-inmate assaults was set in 2022.

Nearly 16,000 NYSCOPBA corrections officers work across 44 facilities in New York State. Of those active members, over 3,000 are women. In some of the larger men's maximum-security facilities, women make up a third to nearly half of the security staff. These female officers are tasked with the same responsibilities and expectations of their male counterparts.

Full Video Version of Press Conference: <https://youtu.be/-2v6dUS3lsw>

For Additional Photos of the Press Conference go to: www.nyscoba.org or our Facebook page at NYSCOPBA PR