



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

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November 8, 2018

Dear NYSCOPBA member,

As has been the subject of much news coverage in recent days, there are significant changes that are about to take place in the state Legislature. In an unprecedented wave of change, Democrats have taken control of the state Senate, giving the party control of both houses of the Legislature and the governor's office.

It is reality that among the many policies that will emerge from the new Albany landscape, there will be those that will create new pressures on members of law enforcement, including the men and women of corrections, that are coming.

I want to be clear: NYSCOPBA has been planning for this change for some time. This very scenario has been discussed and predicted at every NYSCOPBA Executive Assembly meeting over the course of the past year. Our legislative team already has begun to lay the groundwork to give us a seat at the table when it comes to negotiating policies that will impact the safety of all New Yorkers, and we will work tirelessly to make ourselves heard.

We will keep you informed about the most pressing issues moving forward, but there is one in particular that **we need the full force of our membership** to battle.

Legislation dubbed "HALT" threatens to significantly undermine our ability to keep people safe and perform our jobs. This bill would overhaul Special Housing Unit procedures in unprecedented ways, creating mandates that go far beyond other restrictive policies that have made our jobs unquestionably more difficult and more dangerous.

You may be familiar with a prior legal settlement reached between the State and the New York Civil Liberties Union that drastically changed the way our members can utilize SHU as a way to curb violence and other crimes that put everyone in our correctional facilities in harm's way. HALT would go far beyond this settlement, rendering SHU all but useless as a deterrent to crime and as a safety mechanism in our increasingly dangerous facilities.

In short, as currently drafted, HALT most notably would:

- In most cases prevent sending inmates 21 years of age or younger or 55 years of age or older to SHU for any reason whatsoever
- Only allow this new "special population" to be kept in keeplock for a maximum of 48 hours **prior to** a disciplinary hearing

- Prohibit SHU confinements longer than 15 consecutive days (or 20 out of 60 days) for all but the most serious in-facility crimes. Minor assaults on staff **would not** meet the definition of a serious crime under HALT

I will follow up with you soon regarding how you can help us fight off this legislation. In the meantime, I encourage you to stay engaged with the news coming out of Albany about what's coming up in 2019.

Together as a strong, unified union we can turn back these initiatives that will make our state less safe.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael B. Powers". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping tail on the 's'.

Michael B. Powers

President

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