



NY State Assembly Member Carrie Woerner

198 State Street

Albany, NY 12248

Dear NY State Assembly Member Carrie Woerner:



As a constituent represented by the New York State Correctional Officers and Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

(NYSCOPBA), I am writing to express my concerns with the Governor's budget proposal to close up to five



unidentified correctional facilities with only 90 days' notice. This is another slap in the face to me and my brothers

and sisters and I urge you to reject the Governor's proposal to close more prisons.



Current state law requires a one-year notification prior to the closing of a correctional facility; along with an

economic impact study on the affected community - these are laws passed by the state legislature that are

continuously ignored by the 2nd Floor. It is unfair and unreasonable to expect staff and the affected communities

to make life-altering decisions with only 90 days' notice. Families will be uprooted and broken, homes will need

to be purchased and sold, leases will be broken, children will be required to switch schools, commutes to work



will be extended, and businesses will suffer; all evidenced by the impacts of the 20+ prison closures we have

experienced in the last decade. When will it end?



The Governor and DOCCS claim that there will be no staff layoffs as a result of prison closures. Sadly though,

we know that many of my colleagues in security and civilian titles will not remain employed by DOCCS due to

prison closures. We are already experiencing a severe staffing shortage in security and civilian titles in DOCCS.

Prison closures will only exacerbate the crisis and cause dedicated workers to seek employment elsewhere.

Closing prisons is not a sustainable recruitment and retention tool when we are in need of hundreds of bodies to



fill our rank. How can we expect prospective employees to take these jobs if they are concerned that they will be

forced to uproot their families this year, next year, or sometime down the road?



Additionally, the environment that we work in has become increasingly dangerous since the implementation of

the Humane Alternative to Long-Term Solitary Confinement (HALT) law. New York's prison violence has

increased to levels we have never seen before, even with a lower prison population. Over 75% of the prison

population is incarcerated for violent felony offenses. We have suffered dramatic increases with assaults-on-staff

and an even higher increases of assaults on the incarcerated individuals by other incarcerated individuals.



Reducing the capacity of the prison system will cram more violent prisoners into less space resulting in more

violence. This is a formula that has been proven as the violence continues to increase with every round of

closures. Having the space to spread the prison population out, separate problematic individuals, and protect

vulnerable populations is an important tool needed to maintain safety in prison. Closing more prisons will only

add to the extremely volatile working and living conditions we are currently experiencing.



As my elected representative, I kindly ask that you support the members of NYSCOPBA and work with the

leadership in your house to oppose the closure up to five unidentified prisons. Thank you for your time, attention



and consideration of this very important issue.



Sincerely,



Ben Moeller

