



JOE SEMPOLINSKI  
Assemblyman 148<sup>th</sup> District  
Allegany, Cattaraugus, and  
Steuben Counties

THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

REC'D MAR 20 '25 PM 8:54  
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER  
Committee on Mental Health

COMMITTEES  
Education  
Environmental Conservation  
Higher Education  
Labor  
People with Disabilities

March 13, 2025

Hon. Olivia M., Owens, Clerk of the Legislature.  
Erie County Legislature  
92 Franklin St # 4  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Ms. Owens,

Thank you for forwarding me the Erie County Legislatures' Resolution requesting NYS lawmakers and NYS DOCCS to take appropriate measures to address New York State prisons staffing shortage. I appreciate you taking the time to write to me.

Prisons face many challenges all of which are exacerbated by the prevailing staffing crisis. Staffing shortages have led to an increase in dangerous attacks against corrections officers. Increases in mandatory over-time have led to corrections officers being made to work triple shifts, thus fueling increased turnover.

One of the main reasons NYS DOCCS cannot recruit new officers due to the unsafe working conditions caused by the HALT Act. The HALT Act prevents corrections officers from being able to do their job.

I have called for the immediate repeal of the HALT Act to restore safety to New York's prisons for corrections officers and inmates. The HALT Act has harmed corrections officers and has allowed NYS Prisons to divulge into chaos. Along with the staffing shortages the HALT Act stands in the way of corrections officer's safety. Corrections officers take on the hard day-to-day tasks that are made even more dangerous and difficult due to the HALT Act. Corrections officers have faced situations involving out of control inmates and because of the HALT Acts restrictions on solitary confinement officers and other inniates have been harmed.

My thanks to you and the members of the Erie County Legislature for all they do for their constituents. Please accept my best wishes, and feel free to contact me again if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Joe Sempolinski  
Member of Assembly

JMS/mhp