



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

Halt the HALT Act

JAMES TEDISCO March 3, 2025

| ISSUE: **PRISONS; CORRECTIONS OFFICERS; DOCCS; VIOLENT INMATE ATTACKS, RAISE THE AGE REFORM, LESS IS MORE LEGISLATION, JUDICIAL DISCRETION**



By Senator Jim Tedisco

New York State's correctional facilities are in crisis and the safety and security of those who work and are incarcerated in them are being jeopardized if this situation is not resolved by the Governor immediately.

Our state's correction officers have been on strike for the past week outside correctional facilities across the state sounding the alarm about dangerous working conditions in our

state's prisons.

The correction officers cite rapidly deteriorating work conditions, including understaffing, mandatory overtime, excessively long shifts and policies like the HALT Act that have made their jobs exceptionally more difficult and dangerous.

The HALT Act was passed by the Governor and the Legislature's Majorities in 2022. The law severely limits discipline procedures in state prisons to keep correction officers and inmates safe including the use of isolation and solitary confinement.

The misguided HALT Act and other reckless policies passed by the Governor and Majorities have empowered violent inmates, stripped officers of necessary tools to maintain order, and created an untenable crisis in our correctional facilities.

Since the Governor and Majorities enacted the dangerous HALT Act, there has been a dramatic increase in inmate attacks on correction officers, nurses, caregivers and against other inmates.

A recent report from the Department of Corrections shows a massive increase in the number of assaults on correction officers by a whopping 85 percent from 2019 to 2024.

The lack of safety is not just an issue for correction officers and staff, it's also a clear and present danger to inmates as during the past two years since the HALT Act went into effect, inmate on inmate assaults have increased an astonishing 81 percent.

These unsafe working and living conditions are totally unacceptable!

I fully support our state correction officers and support staff who work in some of the most dangerous conditions imaginable.

While any profession has some bad apples, and they certainly need to be weeded out and removed, the vast majority of correction officers and prison support staff are dedicated professionals who work hard and try to do the right thing under some of the most difficult of working conditions.

This week at the state Capitol, I participated with my New York State Senate Minority colleagues in a roundtable discussion with families of correction officers to discuss the ongoing public safety crisis in our state correctional facilities.

In addition to the urgent safety issues facing our correction officers and support staff, many of them who are not on strike are being forced to work for days on end without being able to leave work.

Besides the health and emotional toll on our correctional facility workers this is taking, it's also negatively impacting the families at home and responsibilities for those who are raising children and/or taking care of a sick parent or loved one.

It's heartbreaking to hear how the unsafe working conditions are impacting these families.

I also am very concerned for the safety of our brave National Guard members who have not received the appropriate training, support and compensation to serve in our prisons. Many families of Guard members have contacted me with these serious and valid concerns. It's outrageous that our National Guard are now being placed in harm's way by this governor supported by the Legislature's Majorities from both houses!

I will not stand by and let this insanity continue.

I'm a sponsor of [legislation to repeal the dangerous HALT Act \(S.2656\)](#) and bring common sense back to how our correctional facilities are managed. The HALT Act has got to go, and

it's got to go quickly.

We need to repeal the “Less is More” law and “Raise the Age” which have contributed to a rise in crime in our state and huge burden on our correctional facilities. And we must repeal the dangerous bail reform law that has led to a revolving door of danger and disaster and give judges discretion again to decide if an individual before them is a danger to themselves or others as we do in 49 other states. I’m the prime sponsor and author of the [bi-partisan bill to do that \(S.4461\)](#) and [then bring in the professionals](#) in our criminal justice system – district attorneys, judges, and law enforcement to help create real criminal justice reform.

The crisis in our correctional facilities cannot be allowed to continue.

It’s time the Governor halt the attack on our correction officers, truly create a safe environment for them and the inmates they oversee and repeal the HALT Act now!

RELATED LEGISLATION

2025-S2656

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly

- On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Relates to segregated confinement; repealer

January 22, 2025

In Senate Committee [Crime Victims, Crime and Correction](#)

Sponsored by [Daniel G. Stec](#)

Do you support this bill?

2025-S4461

- Introduced

- ◦ In Committee Assembly

- In Committee Senate

- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly

- On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Repeals certain provisions of the criminal procedure law, judiciary law and the executive law and makes conforming changes thereto; repealer

February 05, 2025

In Senate Committee [Codes](#)

Sponsored by [James Tedisco](#)

Do you support this bill?