



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

RITCHIE HAILS SENATE PASSAGE OF BILL TO PROTECT C.O.'s

PATTY RITCHIE March 8, 2011

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State Senator Patty Ritchie today hailed passage of a bill she's co-sponsored that gives stronger protection to corrections officers from inmates who throw their bodily waste at them.

The Senate voted unanimously to approve S.2141, a bill which closes a loophole in the state's Penal Law that makes it a felony for an inmate to throw human waste at a prison employee.

"Every day, Corrections Officers put their safety on the line in order to protect us, and ensure the orderly operation of state prisons that can contain the most dangerous elements of our society," Sen. Ritchie said.

"This bill provides extra protection by serving as a deterrent to these kinds of disgusting attacks by inmates who are determined to use their very bodies as weapons, using the fear of serious and potentially deadly diseases as a way to harass and terrorize employees," said Sen. Ritchie.

Ritchie said the issue of corrections officers' safety was hammered home in her recent visits to every prison facility in the 48th District, as well as by the fact that her father is a retired

Corrections Officer, who worked at the Riverview Correctional Facility.

“Every day, my family worried for my father’s safety at work, and we wanted to have the best protection possible for him and all the employees of our state prisons. This bill is another step to achieve that goal.”

The bill was sparked by a case in the Hudson Valley where an inmate threw toilet water at a corrections officer. Because there was no way of knowing if the water contained human waste, the officer had to undergo extensive precautionary medical treatment.

The bill amends the law to include throwing of toilet water within the felony statute.

The bill was sent to the Assembly.