



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Expanded Transition Period Needed For Prison Closures

JAMES L. SEWARD July 21, 2011

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ONEONTA, 07/20/11 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I–Oneonta) today joined with several legislative colleagues in calling on Governor Cuomo to extend the transition period for employees affected by pending prison closures.

“Thousands of employees and their families are dealing with life altering decisions as a result of the governor’s prison closures,” said Senator Seward. **“The very least the state can provide is ample transition time for these dedicated workers who are about to have their lives uprooted through no fault of their own.”**

Seven state prison facilities have been targeted for closure by Governor Cuomo, including Summit Shock in Schoharie County. Senator Seward says the 60 day transition period included in the governor's closure plan is insufficient and should be extended to 90 days.

The [letter to the governor](#) reads in part:

“Closing prisons is a state-wide issue affecting thousands of jobs which will require the filing of transfer papers and the potential for employees to have to make life-changing decisions, including selling homes and finding new places to live. As we learn more about the process, it has become apparent that the existing 60-day period is not sufficient.”

“I am fighting to ensure Schoharie County receives its fair share of state economic development funds to create jobs and redefine the local economy in the wake of the Summit Shock closure – that’s the long term issue. In the short term, over one-hundred correction workers are facing major upheaval, they deserve time to make the tough life decisions they are facing,” Seward added.

“Employees at Summit Shock, and other prison facilities targeted for closure, are more than just numbers on a spreadsheet. At the very least, the state should be able to provide these men and women, along with their families, legitimate time to prepare for a new phase in their lives. I don’t believe an extra 30 days is too much to ask,” concluded Senator Seward.