



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kathleen A. Marchione

## Senator Kathy Marchione announces Senate passage of her legislation requiring legislative approval for closure of a correctional facility

KATHLEEN A. MARCHIONE June 19, 2017

| ISSUE: **CORRECTION OFFICERS, PUBLIC SAFETY, CORRECTIONS**

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Albany, NY – Senator Kathy Marchione (R,C,I,Reform-Halfmoon), Chair of the Senate Local Government Committee, today announced the Senate’s passage of her legislation, Senate Bill S.215, that would amend the State Correction Law to require legislative approval for the closure of correctional facilities and institutions across New York State. Senator Marchione’s legislation passed the Senate today by a vote of 51-11.

Senator Marchione’s legislation requires the State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision to submit a report to the State Legislature 365 days prior to any requested closing of a correctional facility or institution. The State Legislature, or its appropriate committees, may approve the closure upon review of the report. If the closure

were unjustified, the State Legislature would then have the ability to deny the proposed closure by a majority vote in both the State Senate and the State Assembly.

Senator Marchione introduced the measure in response to the situation that occurred at Mount McGregor, a Correctional Facility in the Town of Wilton that employed 320 people, housed over 450 inmates, and was targeted for closure. With the State's announcement of the closure and three other facilities across the state like it, no permanent plan had been created to account for the parole or relocation of the facility's inmates, as well as transfers or retraining for current employees. State government has a responsibility to establish necessary plans for current inmates and employees of correctional facilities instead of arbitrarily turning out the lights on unsuspecting guards, prisoners, and communities. In rural regions of Upstate New York, correctional facilities play a vital role in the local economy, employing many area residents who not only protect and serve but also comprise the very communities that support schools, municipalities and local businesses.

Senator Marchione's legislation would provide much-needed transparency, public debate and far greater oversight to this process. Legislative review would provide for a deliberative discussion by duly elected representatives instead of the decision being left to unelected bureaucrats.

"The dedicated public safety professionals at New York's correctional facilities do an incredible job in some of the most difficult, demanding and dangerous conditions imaginable. Our public safety professionals play a vital role in keeping our neighborhoods,

our communities, and our state safe. These hardworking men and women – and their elected representatives – must have their voices heard before any correctional facility is targeted for closure and, more importantly, have the ability to stop any closure. With New York State in the midst of a public health epidemic of heroin and opioid abuse and addiction, closing these facilities when they could otherwise be re-purposed to provide substance abuse services is the wrong approach. My legislation would require legislative approval to safeguard against correctional facility closures that will make us less safe and less secure,” Senator Marchione said.

Senator Marchione’s legislation has an Assembly companion measure, Assembly Bill A.8152, sponsored by Assemblyman Felix Ortiz (D-Kings). The Assembly companion legislation was referred to the Assembly Corrections Committee on May 31, 2017.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2017-S215**

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- 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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Requires legislative approval for the closure of correctional facilities and institutions

December 30, 2016

In Senate Committee **Finance**

Sponsored by **Kathleen A. Marchione**

Do you support this bill?