



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

HELMING: LOCKDOWN AT AUBURN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY UNDERSCORES THE NEED FOR CONTRABAND CRACKDOWN

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| ISSUE: **CONTRABAND, CRIME AND CORRECTION**

GENEVA – In the wake of a recent lockdown at Auburn Correctional Facility in Cayuga County, Senator Pam Helming is calling on Governor Cuomo and the Assembly Democratic Majority to support her legislation (S.7582A/A.9885) to crackdown on contraband in New York State correctional facilities. Auburn had been locked down since for several days due to escalating problems that erupted in multiple fights throughout the prison. Correction officers at Auburn conducted a full facility search and had to deem the facility safe for both officers and inmates before ending the lockdown on Friday, April 27.

“The increase in violence and the recent lockdown at Auburn Correctional Facility underscores the need to crackdown on contraband – especially weapons – coming into our state correctional facilities. It is painfully obvious that the steps DOCCS has taken so far to address contraband are not enough. Our brave corrections officers need swift action to curtail the violence,” said **Senator Pam Helming**. “My legislation will give officers the additional support and tools they need to help stop contraband and the violence that results when illegal drugs and weapons enter our prisons. I urge Governor Cuomo and my colleagues in the Assembly to get on board so that we can create a safer environment for both officers and inmates.”

“The recent lockdown and violence at Auburn Correctional Facility underscores the need for new, stricter policies to address contraband that makes its way into our prisons. Drugs and weapons that get into the hands of inmates through mailed packages or inmate visits create a dangerous environment for staff. Currently, contraband is at record levels and officers do not have the necessary tools to contend with it. We strongly encourage Governor Cuomo and the State Assembly to support Senator Helming’s legislation that would give our members the additional resources that are necessary to combat the current high levels of contraband,” said **Michael Powers, president, NYSCOPBA.**

On April 26, there were three separate fights that occurred in D Block– in which force needed be used and weapons were ultimately found. Just a day prior on April 25, there were multiple fights in two other cell blocks that involved weapons and officers were forced to use OC Pepper Spray. Some staff did receive minor injuries. During the frisk, officers found 21 weapons.

Senator Helming’s legislation would require the Commissioner of DOCCS to establish a contraband screen plan in correctional facilities that would include random selection and search of visitors’ vehicles entering a facilities’ grounds, use of leashed and controlled canines at entrances, electronic, image, physical and visual searches of visitors entering facilities, and require the DOCCS Commissioner to provide the Legislature with an annual report summarizing the current plan and the results of the prior year’s plan.

Senator Helming represents the 54th Senate District, which consists of Seneca and Wayne Counties, parts of Cayuga and Ontario Counties, and the towns of Lansing and Webster. For more information, please visit Senator Helming’s [website](#), or follow @SenatorHelming on Facebook or Twitter.

RELATED LEGISLATION

2017-S7582A

- 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 contraband screening at correctional facilities](#)

January 26, 2018

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by [Pamela Helming](#)

Do you support this bill?