



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo urges Hochul to undertake investigation of ‘alarming acts of violence’ against state’s corrections officers, prison staff

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO November 30, 2021

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Following a spike in serious and violent assaults on corrections officers and civilian staff in New York’s prisons, state Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, is urging Gov. Kathy Hochul to direct the Inspector General to conduct an immediate and thorough investigation to determine the best course of action to address this issue.

Sen. Griffo made the request in a letter to the governor following a recent incident at Mid-State Correctional Facility in Marcy where a violent inmate allegedly attacked and injured two corrections officers. One of the officers sustained a broken nose and lacerations while the other was punched in the face and sustained right eye swelling and injuries to his hand and knee as a result of the alleged altercation.

In his letter, Sen. Griffo also asked that the governor release information and data related to her decision to close prisons and to appoint a permanent state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision commissioner. The department has had an acting commissioner for more than eight years.

“New York’s hardworking and dedicated corrections officers and civilian staff should not have to live in fear every time that they go to work,” **Sen. Griffo said.** “An investigation into

these alarming acts of violence must be undertaken immediately so the state can address and deal with this issue and ensure the safety and wellbeing of men and women working in the state's correctional facilities. I also am calling on the governor to release the information that she and her administration used to determine which prisons in the state would close, which I do not support. The public deserves to have the opportunity to fully scrutinize all of the details that ultimately culminated in this unacceptable decision.”

*The full text of Sen. Griffo's letter to the governor is below:*

Gov. Kathy Hochul

Executive Chamber

NYS State Capitol Building

Albany, NY 12224

Dear Gov. Hochul:

I am concerned and alarmed by a reported increase in serious assaults against corrections officers and civilian staff at the state's correctional facilities, including two significant incidents in my senate district. As such, I am requesting that you direct the Inspector General to conduct an immediate and thorough investigation into this issue so that we can determine the best course of action to address and rectify these situations.

Additionally, I urge you to release publicly the information and data that you and your administration used to determine additional prison closures. As we have seen crime statistics across the state and nation rise, we should instead be discussing how to make important changes to recent legislation that has only made our communities less safe and put the criminal justice system at a severe disadvantage.

As you begin to make decisions about and appointments to your administration, I also urge you to finally appoint a permanent head of the state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. While the current commissioner is qualified for the position, it is outrageous and absurd that the department has had an acting commissioner for almost a decade.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Griffo

New York State Senator, 47<sup>th</sup> District