



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo to DOCCS: Take action immediately to address violence against corrections officers and civilian staff

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO May 4, 2022

| ISSUE: **PRISONS; CORRECTIONS OFFICERS; DOCCS; VIOLENT INMATE ATTACKS**

After a recent attack on a corrections officer at Mohawk Correctional Facility in Rome, state Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, has sent a letter to state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) Acting Commissioner Anthony Annucci urging immediate action to address violence against officers and civilian staff at correctional facilities throughout the state.

“Unfortunately, violent acts such as this have become all too common at the state’s correctional facilities,” **Sen. Griffo wrote to Acting Commissioner Annucci.** “The New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association recently reported that data maintained by your department indicates that assaults on staff reached a record number of 1,173 in 2021. Assaults on staff this year puts DOCCS on a pace to meet or exceed 2021’s record breaking total, according to the association. This is unacceptable and must be stopped.”

The full text of the letter is below:

May 3, 2022

Anthony Annucci

Acting Commissioner

New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision

Harriman State Campus

1220 Washington Avenue

Albany, NY 12226

Dear Acting Commissioner Annucci:

I write in regard to the continued violence against corrections officers and civilian staff that has occurred at correctional facilities that I represent in my Senate District and throughout the state, a trend that must be resolved.

Most recently, a corrections officer at Mohawk Correctional Facility in Rome suffered a back injury, cracked tooth, laceration to his finger and facial swelling after an inmate allegedly became agitated and attacked officers who were transporting the inmate to another dorm.

Unfortunately, violent acts such as this have become all too common at the state's correctional facilities. The New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association recently reported that data maintained by your department indicates that assaults on staff reached a record number of 1,173 in 2021. Assaults on staff this year puts DOCCS on a pace to meet or exceed 2021's record breaking total, according to the association. This is unacceptable and must be stopped.

At a hearing of the Senate's Finance Committee on March 1, 2022, you indicated that a comprehensive task force consisting of deputy DOCCS commissioners, superintendents from maximum and medium security prisons and members from respective bargaining units

had met to discuss the ongoing violence against officers and staff. During the hearing, you stated that this meeting included detailed analyses of assaults, as well as all that DOCCS had done so far and future steps that could be taken to end violence on staff.

New York's hardworking and dedicated corrections officers and civilian staff cannot wait any longer. Corrections employees understand the dangerousness of their jobs but this increase in violence is unnecessary and unsustainable, and DOCCS personnel deserve a better degree of safety. It is time, as I have advocated during my time in the Senate, you and your department take the action necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of men and women working in the state's correctional facilities.

Please inform me of what is being done now to address this troubling matter. I look forward to your expeditious response.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Griffo

New York State Senator, 47th Senate District

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