



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel G. Stec

Stec, Assemblyman Simpson and NYSCOPBA Renew Call to Repeal HALT at Great Meadow Press Conference

DANIEL G. STEC July 20, 2022

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Senator Dan Stec (R,C-Queensbury), Assemblyman Matt Simpson (R,C,I-Horicon), New York State Corrections Officers PBA President Michael Powers and Northern Region Vice President John Roberts today held a press conference outside Great Meadow Correctional Facility to call for a repeal of the HALT Act.

HALT severely limits the use of special housing units in correctional facilities. Since HALT's implementation on April 1, data from the state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) shows that overall assaults in facilities has risen well by well over 30 percent. At this rate, a new record for attacks in correctional facilities in one calendar year will be set this October.

The spike in assaults, in conjunction with declining officer recruitment numbers and increased retirements since HALT's implementation, has caused a crisis inside correctional facilities. Senator Stec and Assemblyman Simpson sponsor legislation to repeal HALT (Senate bill S9378/Assembly bill A10593) and urged the Governor and Legislature to take action on it and help restore safety inside correctional facilities and support officers and civilian staff.

“Since the implementation of HALT, it seems like serious inmate assaults on officers, civilian staff and other inmates has become commonplace,” **said Senator Stec**. “It’s unacceptable that our corrections officers and civilian staff don’t have the full range of resources necessary to offer protection against violent, disruptive inmates. We must take action immediately and make correctional facilities safer by repealing HALT. I’m proud to stand for public safety and stand with our corrections officers and will continue working to ensure they have the support they need to do their dangerous, essential work.”

“I cannot condone any type of violence so I will continue to support my colleagues and correction officers until we successfully repeal the HALT Act. Selfishly and abruptly changing the level of structure ultimately gives more power to the inmates, leaving correction officers unwilling to remain on the job and sacrifice their safety. Look at the data on the rise of inmate attacks and listen to those working in the facilities who demand we make the necessary changes to keep them safe. We must use our common sense and put an end to the HALT Act once and for all,” **said Assemblyman Simpson**.

“The data tells you everything you need to know about the impact the HALT Act has had on our correctional facilities. According to the State’s numbers, attacks on staff are up 37% since the implementation of HALT. Factor that increased violence in with the continued mandatory overtime our members are forced to endure to meet all of the programming requirements included in the HALT Act, and you have a job that is not only dangerous for your physical well-being, but your mental health as well. We thank our partners in the NYS Legislature who support repealing the HALT Act because it is vital that this issue is immediately addressed to return some semblance of meaningful deterrents back into our facilities and allow our officers to safely perform the jobs they were hired to do” **said NYSCOPBA President Michael Powers**.

“Since the HALT Act was implemented just a few short months ago, the level of violence our officers have had to endure not only at Great Meadow Correctional Facility, but in prisons across the state, is alarming and unsustainable. By the end of this week, over 500 staff members will have been the victim of a violent assault inside a New York State correctional facility just since April 1 of this year. The HALT Act has done nothing to improve the lives of anyone who works or resides in a prison and in fact, conditions are worsening by the day. Simply put, repeal the HALT Act now,” **said NYSCOPBA Northern Region Vice President John Roberts.**