



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senate Passes Legislation Allowing Community Benefit Projects to Receive Help from Prison Work Release Programs

CATHARINE YOUNG June 16, 2014

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The New York State Senate today passed legislation (S2204A), sponsored by Senator Cathy Young (R-I-C, Olean), that would expand work release programs to allow eligible inmates, deemed not to be dangerous, to help with not-for-profit organizations and public service projects. The bill utilizes this work force productively to help communities while giving inmates job-training opportunities.

Senator Young said, "As inmates approach their release date, it is vital that their reintegration process is already underway and they are not released just to return again. The valuable opportunities provided by work release programs help inmates to start giving back to society and relearn the skills they need to become productive members of the community. In giving inmates a chance to turn their lives around, while at the same time helping support worthy public service projects, it is a win-win for everyone."

The inmate work release program is used in prisons across the state for inmates who are nearing the completion of their sentence, and for those who meet specific eligibility requirements. The program is an important educational and job training tool that fosters gradual reintegration to society.

This legislation would expand upon the current program by allowing inmates to help not-for-profit organizations and work on public service projects maintaining cemeteries, baseball fields, libraries, and parks. Providing more options for these programs would increase community enhancement of these facilities at no additional cost to taxpayers.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.

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