



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

Statement from Senator George Borrello on the Tentative Agreement Reached Between New York State and NYSCOPBA

GEORGE M. BORRELLO February 28, 2025

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For years, I have been a vocal advocate for our corrections officers, who have been subjected to increasingly intolerable and inhumane working conditions. The HALT Act has made an already dangerous job even worse, stripping officers of the necessary tools to maintain order and safety in our prisons. I have stood with them as they've fought for fair treatment, and I will continue to do so.

The tentative agreement reached by a mediator and NYSCOPBA would allow for the temporary suspension of certain provisions of the HALT Act to provide an opportunity for evaluation. It remains to be seen whether this will lead to real, lasting reforms. Additionally, while this agreement includes a provision to have a third-party mail vendor screen all incoming inmate mail, which is a positive step, it fails to include the mandatory use of body scanners for visitors to detect dangerous drugs like fentanyl and K2 which continue to enter the prisons at an alarming rate and have been responsible for life-threatening emergencies for dozens of corrections officers. Overall, I still have serious reservations about whether the changes offered in this tentative agreement go far enough to truly restore order and safety to our corrections facilities.

It will ultimately be up to the striking corrections officers to decide whether this tentative agreement addresses their concerns and is acceptable to them. However, continuing to strike comes at a steep cost, with the threat of severe financial penalties, lost wages, and even the loss of health insurance weighing heavily on their decisions. These officers must decide what is best for them and their families, and I will continue to support them wholeheartedly, no matter the choice they make or the challenges they face in this fight for safer working conditions and real reform.

This entire situation is yet another example of the disastrous consequences of the out-of-touch, far-left policies pushed by an activist legislature, while Governor Hochul mindlessly steers New York further into decline, appeasing them at every turn instead of standing up for law and order. Their reckless, pro-criminal agenda has already turned our streets and communities into havens for lawlessness, and now we see its impact endangering those who put their lives on the line to maintain order behind prison walls. The fallout from these policies continues to unfold across our state, and unless we change course, the chaos will only deepen.