



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Opposes DOCCS' Decision to Release Inmates Early

JIM RANNEY April 3, 2025

| ISSUE: **PRISONS; CORRECTIONS OFFICERS; DOCCS;**



State Should Rehire Correction Officers to Address Staffing Crisis

Senator Patrick M. Gallivan, (R-C, Elma) is troubled by a directive from the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) to release some state prison inmates ahead of schedule in response to an on-going staffing crisis at state facilities. Prison superintendents have been told to compile a list of eligible inmates, which is expected to number in the hundreds.

The staffing shortage inside state prisons has been exacerbated by the firing of about 2,000 correction officers who participated in a wildcat strike to protest mandatory overtime and a state law limiting the use of solitary confinement, which is detrimental to the safety and security of officers, staff and inmates inside state facilities.

“The decision to make hundreds of inmates eligible for early release to address the current staffing crisis in our prisons raises serious concerns about public safety,” Senator Gallivan said. “The staffing shortage is due in large part to the decision to fire correction officers who violated the state’s Taylor Law. The Taylor Law, however, provides penalty options short of termination. Instead of releasing inmates, the state can immediately address the staffing concerns by re-hiring the fired correction officers who want their jobs back.”

The Taylor Law prohibits public employees from striking. Penalties for violating the law often include loss of pay, fines, and other penalties. Termination of employment is not required.

The state has deployed members of the National Guard, who are not trained for this type of work, to prison facilities to replace correction officers, reportedly at a cost of over \$100 million per month.