



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Walczyk

## WALCZYK, BLANKENBUSH INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO INCREASE REIMBURSEMENT FOR COUNTIES HOUSING STATE-READY INMATES

MARK WALCZYK July 10, 2025

In an effort to address a pressing issue affecting counties across New York, Senator Mark Walczyk and Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush have introduced legislation (S8448) aimed at increasing the reimbursement rate for localities housing "state-ready" inmates—individuals sentenced to state prison who are currently residing in county jails while awaiting pickup by state authorities.

Currently, New York State provides counties with \$100 per inmate per day for those held in county facilities, a rate unchanged since 1988. This outdated reimbursement structure places a substantial financial strain on localities, failing to account for inflation and the rising costs of housing inmates. For instance, St. Lawrence County has reported a staggering loss of over \$300,000 due to delays in transferring state-ready inmates. Sheriff Engle, who brought this matter to our attention, expressed his frustration, stating, "Counties are losing significant resources while waiting for the state to take responsibility."

Under the proposed bill, local governments would receive a reimbursement of \$300 per day per inmate for the first ten days of incarceration, increasing to \$600 per day thereafter, or the actual per capita cost, whichever is higher. Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush is carrying this bill in the Assembly. Senator Walczyk believes this legislation will help alleviate some of the financial burdens on local governments. "It's clear that the state is shifting costs onto counties, saving itself about half a million dollars a day," said Walczyk. "This bill aims not only to provide much-needed

financial relief to counties but also to incentivize the state to expedite the transfer of these individuals to appropriate facilities without delay.”

Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush agrees with Walczyk's sentiments, stating, "Unfunded and underfunded mandates have become New York State's favorite punishment for our hardworking county governments. With the state's failure to transfer incarcerated individuals within the agreed-upon timeframe, counties are having to bear the financial burden for this incompetence. This bill addresses that, and I am proud to be the Assembly sponsor."

The proposed legislation seeks to rectify the financial strains placed on local governments while ensuring that incarcerated individuals receive the necessary services during their time in county facilities. It is unacceptable for localities and their taxpayers to shoulder the financial burden of the state's failures. "We must hold the state accountable for its responsibilities and ensure that adequate resources are directed toward the proper care of these individuals," asserted Senator Walczyk.

"It's been a long time coming for this adjustment. Counties are nickel and dimed every day. My sincere thanks to Senator Walczyk and Assemblyman Blankenbush for introducing this legislation, which will help ease the burden on Lewis County taxpayers and help keep residents safe," said Lewis County Sheriff Mike Carpinelli.

"I support Senator Walczyk 100% in this jointly sponsored legislation for additional reimbursement to Jefferson County for housing state-ready incarcerated individuals. New York State has swindled the counties for years in the reimbursement of state-ready individuals, and it is long overdue for immediate attention on this matter," stated Sheriff Peter Barnett of Jefferson County.

Herkimer County Sheriff Scott Scherer added, "I stand with Senator Walczyk in advocating for fair reimbursement for counties housing state-ready inmates. This legislation addresses an urgent need and helps ensure that our local law enforcement can focus on keeping our communities safe without the burden of rising costs. It's time for the state to step up and fulfill its responsibilities."

Oswego County Sheriff Don Hilton stated, "As a sheriff committed to public safety, I fully support Senator Walczyk's efforts to increase reimbursement rates for housing state-ready incarcerated individuals. This legislation is a vital step toward alleviating the financial strain on our counties and ensuring that we can provide the necessary care and resources for individuals in our custody."

Fulton County Sheriff Rich Giardino remarked, "Senator Walczyk's jointly sponsored legislation on reimbursement goes a long way in supporting the sheriffs in housing state-ready inmates. The financial burden to our counties is far greater than the \$100 currently allowed. I wholeheartedly support the full reimbursement act."

Hamilton County Sheriff Karl Abrams echoed these sentiments, stating, "Counties have been shortchanged by the state on this matter for years. It's high time we ease the burden on taxpayers. This bill will go a long way in allowing my office to better serve and protect the residents of Hamilton County while also lessening the tax burden on an already overtaxed population."