



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy Cooney

Sen. Jeremy Cooney, NYS Troopers PBA Call on Governor Hochul to Swiftly Sign State Police Mental Health Leave Bill into Law

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Amid Recruitment and Retention Crisis, First-in-the-Nation Legislation Mandates Creation of a Critical Incident Leave Policy to Support Trooper Well-Being, Improve Public Safety

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (July 14, 2025) - State Senator Jeremy Cooney and leaders of the New York State Troopers Police Benevolent Association (NYSTPBA) today called on Gov. Kathy Hochul to sign legislation that would establish a nation-leading critical incident leave policy for State the Police.

Senator Cooney and union leaders gathered at **Pulaski Park**, which is just blocks away from an April 2021 incident on Fairbanks Street in which a parolee who held a woman at knifepoint was shot and critically injured by a Trooper.

Video of the press conference can be downloaded [here](#).

Under the bill ([S2681/A6452](#)), which sailed through the state Legislature in June with overwhelming bipartisan support, State Troopers will be entitled to up to 20 days of paid [leave](#) to allow them sufficient time to process and recover from involvement in a use of force incident that leads to the serious injury or death of another person. Troopers indirectly impacted by such events would be eligible for up to 15 days of paid leave.

This voluntary policy will ensure that Troopers exposed to dangerous incidents are not put in a position in which they must deal with stigma or financial penalties for taking extended time off to fully recover and prepare to safely return to work.

“Our New York State Troopers are putting their lives on the line every day to keep our communities safe, inevitably leading to situations that can leave a physical and mental toll on our officers,” said **Senator Jeremy Cooney**. “In New York, we owe it to these officers to make sure they’re taken care of and given the space they need to recover from these critical incidents. I encourage Governor Hochul to sign my bill into law, and I hope that this will become a national model for recruitment, how we address mental health issues, and how we support our law enforcement agencies.”

The National Institutes of Health reports that [PTSD rates among law enforcement officers are as high as 19%](#), more than double that of the general public. While [about half of all adults in America](#) will experience at least one traumatic event in their lives, 2023 FBI analysis found that members of law enforcement are exposed to [an average of 178 traumatic incidents](#)

throughout their career.

“Every day our Troopers show unwavering resolve and professionalism as they bravely risk their physical and mental health to honor their commitment to public service,” said **New York State Troopers PBA President Charles W. Murphy**. “We must ensure they have access to services that will aid in their recovery, without fear they will face retaliation or be stigmatized for looking after their own mental health.”

As outlined in the legislation, which was sponsored by Senator Cooney and Assemblymember Patrick Burke, a critical incident policy for the New York State Police would set a nation-leading standard for how law enforcement agencies help officers address issues following traumatic incidents. Currently, only Kentucky and Texas have formally adopted standards regarding critical incidents, with few safeguards that guarantee adequate leave is offered by individual departments that opt in.

Lack of critical incident leave is one of several factors leading to the significant burnout that is forcing Troopers out of the profession earlier and at higher rates than ever before. Since 2006, New York has seen a 520% increase in annual Trooper retirements, from 49 in 2006 to 304 in 2024.

Trooper Martin McClellan, NYSTPBA treasurer, was present at the 2021 Fairbanks Street incident. He said he clearly remembers a “chaotic, serious, and dangerous situation – one where both law enforcement officers and an innocent member of the public were at immediate risk of serious physical injury or death.”

“As Troopers, we know every shift can bring this kind of danger,” McClellan added. “We accept that risk when we put on the gray uniform and swear to protect the people of New York. But these incidents take a serious toll on members physical and mental health. Right

now, Troopers involved in a critical incident are eligible for just three days off. We know that's not nearly enough. The next critical incident could happen at any time. We hope that it doesn't, but we know the reality of our job is that it is entirely unpredictable. Troopers are committed to protecting all New Yorkers, now it's time for New Yorkers to return the favor."

ABOUT THE NEW YORK STATE TROOPERS PBA

Representing 7,000 active and retired uniformed members, the New York State Troopers Police Benevolent Association works hard to serve and protect its members who work hard to serve and protect you.

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