



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

Senate Republicans Fight to Keep Prisons Open

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO April 1, 2009

The New York Senate Republican Conference today introduced an amendment that would to keep three minimum security prisons in Upstate New York operating. Under the budget agreement announced by Governor Paterson, Speaker Silver, and Senator Smith, Camp Gabriels in Franklin County, Mt. McGregor in Saratoga County, and Camp Pharsalia in Chenango County would be closed without the required twelve month notice required by law.

The closure of the prisons would result in the loss of over 300 jobs in Upstate New York. Senate Democrats voted to defeat the amendment.

"Closing these facilities will hurt the economy of Upstate New York, it will hurt our communities, and it will hurt the employees and their families," said Senate Republican Leader Dean G. Skelos. "To add insult to injury, the Democratic leaders of our state have decided to close these facilities, without the twelve month notification required under state law. I urge all of my colleagues to support this amendment in order to keep our communities safe, and keep these jobs in Upstate New York."

"The brave men and women who serve as New York's correctional officers walk one of the toughest beats in law enforcement today," said Senator Michael Nozzolio. "Every day, they leave their families and put their lives on the line to help keep the most violent felons locked

up so that our communities are safer. Closing prisons and cutting resources would lead to even more job losses for Upstate New York, create more dangerous working conditions for our correction officers by overcrowding the remaining prisons, and result in instability in the state prison system."

"I am greatly disappointed at the news that Camp McGregor is being closed in this budget," said Senator Roy McDonald. "Facilities like these are important; they provide jobs to people in our communities and they are an important part of our criminal justice system. To close them, especially without the required twelve month notification, would be devastating to our communities which is why my colleagues and I are fighting to keep them open."

"The closure of the Camp McGregor minimum security facility would be a huge loss to the community," said Senator Hugh T. Farley. "I believe that Camp McGregor can continue to play a valuable role in our correctional system, helping to prepare inmates for their return to society as productive citizens. The facility has not only had a positive economic impact on the area, but the prison community has developed a positive relationship with many localities and nonprofit organizations, providing services that have been of great value to the region."

"Year after year, I've fought Albany to save the jobs at Camp Pharsalia," said Senator Libous. "I introduced a Budget amendment that would keep Camp Pharsalia open and protect the hardworking men and women employed there because I won't let it go down without a fight."

"This year's secretive budget process completely bypassed the conference committees and denied me and my colleagues the chance to talk in a public forum about the impact of prison camp closures on our communities and to question the effect on the criminal justice system," said Senator Betty Little. "Given the emphasis on drug rehab, I am very concerned that by

closing Camp Gabriels, the chance to do something creative and productive is being lost."