



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Darrel J. Aubertine

## **Rally for Ogdensburg Correctional: Aubertine Receives Standing Ovation**

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OGDENSBURG (January 29, 2010)—State Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine and a panel of union leaders, local and state officials met today with staff from the Ogdensburg Correctional Facility and community members to rally support for the facility, which is slated for closure in the proposed executive budget.

Sen. Aubertine expressed his unqualified support for the workers and questioned the rationale used to even suggest closing the facility.

The Senator and other speakers stressed the following facts:

- The proposed closure would not save the state any money in the 2010-11 fiscal year.
- Ogdensburg is at 97 percent capacity, and New York State as a whole has 4,000 more inmates than staffed beds, accommodating those inmates through double bunking (a controversial practice of putting two inmates in a space meant for one).
- At any given time, more than 500 inmates are in holding at municipal jails, waiting for placement in the state prison system.
- Correction officers do “the state tour” traveling from facility to facility requesting transfers until they land in the facility of their choosing. The waiting lists for placement in Ogdensburg, Gouverneur, Riverview and other North Country facilities is significantly longer than the list of correction officers looking for a downstate transfer.
- The state spends a significant amount of money, estimated at more than \$1 million per year, bussing inmates’ families to facilities across the state, but dedicated and law abiding employees who have worked their way through the system to be close to their loved ones would be separated from their families.
- Since 1999 when prison populations in New York were at their peak, the number of correction officers has decreased with the decreasing population, while the number of administration officials has gone from 511 then to 907 in Albany now, yet the governor’s office has not proposed any administrative cuts.

Sen. Aubertine also stressed that the supposed \$9 million capital costs this closure would defray are not necessarily real either, as they are based on an assumption that the current contract with Alliance Energy to provide steam for this facility and the neighboring psychological center will not be renewed. The Senator said that rather than cutting 297 jobs in Ogdensburg, the state should be focused on creating

jobs and a new contract, along with working to ensure that Alliance can move forward with plans for a biomass facility. This would not only save the state the cost of a new boiler system and preserve hundreds of jobs, but generate new economic development and new jobs.

The Senator received continued applause for his comments, including a pair of standing ovations from the crowd of more than 300 concerned residents. If you haven't done so already, don't forget to [JOIN THE FIGHT to Keep Ogdensburg Correctional Facility Open](#)