



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara expresses support for state correctional officers at Capitol rally: Read and watch more

[Thomas F. O'Mara](#)

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- [correctional officers](#)



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Elmira, N.Y., May 1—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) today threw his support behind the state's correctional officers at a rally in Albany's West Capitol Park sponsored by the New York State Correctional Officers Police Benevolent Association ([NYSCOPBA](#)) to raise awareness of deteriorating conditions within prisons statewide.

O'Mara, a member of the Senate Codes and Judiciary committees whose legislative district includes the Elmira Correctional Facility and the Southport Correctional Facility, said, "There's a dangerous, increasingly volatile environment within our state prisons and our correctional officers are at risk. Prison violence is at an all-time high for several reasons including staff cuts, budget reductions and highly questionable policy decisions during the Cuomo administration. I agree with our correctional officers that many of these cuts, facility closures and other policies don't make sense, including the 2015 settlement to restrict the use of special housing units even for the most brutal, violent felons imaginable. It's made a

difficult, dangerous job even less safe. The officers at the Elmira and Southport correctional facilities, and at prisons statewide, deserve and need the absolute best in training, technology and tools to combat this rising tide of violence, including policies and procedures to encourage good behavior. I'm proud to represent a large number correctional officers and their families. I respect the job they do, their dedicated service and commitment to public safety, and I will stand firmly behind them in every effort to achieve a more secure prison environment."

[\[View Senator O'Mara's remarks at today's rally\]](#)

O'Mara and other legislators and supporters at today's rally highlighted the fact that there were 760 assaults on correction officers last year, up 45 percent from 2012.

Last April, in a statement addressing the rising violence within the state prison system, New York State Correctional Officers and Police Benevolent Association (NYSCOPBA) President Michael Powers said that "correction officers go to work every day in an increasingly dangerous environment that puts both their own lives and the lives of inmates in jeopardy. It's time we began a conversation to reshape our prisons into a safer and more secure environment for those who work and live there."