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## TROOPERS TRY 12 HOUR SHIFTS TO LIGHTEN LOAD

By Associated Press Writer-- Jesse J. Holland

Albany-- State police road units in two areas of NY have started working 12-hour shifts as a morale-boosting alternative to traditional schedules which only gave troopers a couple weekends off every year. The tradeoff for troopers working longer days, and more hours per week, is getting every other Friday, Saturday and Sunday off. Something that the troopers' union asked to try experimentally as a means of finding ways to improve the quality of life for all members of the force.

Having regular weekends off will let troopers enjoy time with their family and friends and relieve some of the stress and fatigue of the job, experts said. Currently, troopers work a staggered eight hour, five day a week schedule that only gives them about two non-vacation, Saturday-Sunday weekends off a year.

"Anything that affords the members of the state police a better quality of life and more normalcy without detracting from the patrol coverage and their effectiveness has to be a good thing," said Robert Kastelli, a

former trooper and current professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in the City University of NY. As of Monday, about 400 state police in the Albany and Binghamton regions have begun experimenting with the new schedules which has troopers working 12 hour shifts for either two or three days a week.

The change will add around 42 hours to troopers' work year. But because they'll be on the job longer each day, troopers will get about 66 additional days off a year. Plus that three day weekend every two weeks. Since 1962, NY troopers have been working five eight hour days a week, but the work days were staggered and changed monthly.

Officials aren't sure whether the new 12-hour days will lead to fatigued troopers driving on the highways or otherwise affect their performances while on duty, said State police Col. Harry Corbitt, the department's second in command. "It is a concern on the management side," Corbitt said. "We realize that working 12-hour days is a lot. But they will be working 66 less days a year. Probably the time off will balance out the time they are working. But this is something that we will be monitoring very closely."

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## **McCALL URGES STATE RETIREES TO ACTION**

Calls for support for annual cost of living increase in pensions

Plattsburgh-- State Comptroller H. Carl McCall urged local retirees to help him get a permanent cost of living increase established for state workers. Speaking before about 250 retirees of CSEA thursday afternoon, McCall said there is plenty of money in the pension fund to afford an annual increase. "The fund is doing well enough to afford it, and the public servants deserve it," McCall said. "Who came up here and helped out during the ice storm? It wasn't IBM or Xerox; it was public employees." The State Legislature must approve a permanent cost of living increase.

McCall said his strategy is to get leaders of the eight major pension funds in the state together this year to agree on a plan. Then, next year, when many state representatives are up for election, the plan would be brought to the legislature. "I don't know what it is, but it seems like more things get done when it's an election year," McCall said tongue in cheek, to the laughter of the crowd.

"I urge you to convince your legislators to do this." Thomas Bergin, spokesman for State Sen. Stafford, said the senator, who chairs the powerful finance committee, has always been supportive of a cost of living increase for retirees. "We'll be happy to look at any plan," Bergin said. This pension fund has been successful under McCall's leadership. In recent years, it has grown from \$56 billion to \$110 billion.

The comptroller reiterated his opposition to the state's past attempts to raid the pension fund for state business. "The pension fund is not a slush fund to bail out the state. It's there for the retirees," McCall said. John Kourofsky, president of the CSEA local 916, said a permanent cost of living increase is critical to many area retirees.

"A lot of people are on fixed incomes, and it's hard for them to make ends meet," Kourofsky said. McCall said that under his plan, those who have been retired the longest will get the biggest bumps. "Because when they retired a long time ago, wages were lower so their benefits were lower," McCall

said. That would help people like George Ciccone, who retired from the Plattsburgh City Fire Dept. 21 years ago. "It's been 18 years since I got an increase," Ciccone, 65, said.

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## 10 ALTONA INMATES MOVED BECAUSE OF FIGHTS

Ten inmates at Altona CF have been transferred to other prisons following fighting Thursday. One inmate was slashed and five others hurt in the second of two fights at the prison early Thursday. Emilio Polanis 51, suffered throat cuts in a fight at one of the prison dormitories just before noon.

The fracas was believed to be in response to a fight 90 minutes earlier in a movie area, where six of 95 inmates began throwing chairs at one another, said Michael Houston, State Dept of correction spokesman. State Police are investigating the cause of the fight and what weapon was used to cut Polanis, who has been in Altona since 1997 for a drug sale conviction in Manhattan.

He was treated at CVPH and released. Altona employees were not injured. Inmates were locked in their cells and programs suspended as authorities interviewed prisoners. In addition to possible charges, Houston said inmates involved in the fighting face disciplinary action. "Commissioner Glenn Goord will not tolerate this type of behavior," he said.

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## Provincial election time in Ontario

It's provincial election time here in Ontario, and the ruling far-right Conservatives are planning private jails if re-elected. The centrist Liberal party is on record to being opposed to private jails. Recent polls indicate a slight edge for the Conservatives in the 46% conservative 42% Liberal range. The leftist New Democratic Party is a distant 10%. It's time to mobilize the troops! The election is 3 June.

Jim Fraser

<http://www.opseu.org/news/Press99/May1699.htm>

These are Ontario's newspapers to target in our campaign to stop private prisons from entering Ontario.

Brantford Expositor

E-mail Address(es): brtexp@southam.ca

Brockville Recorder- Times

E-mail Address(es): online-ed@recorder.ca

Collingwood Enterprise- Bull...

E-mail Address(es): editor@eb.georgian.net

Hamilton Spectator

E-Mail address(es): pvanharten@hamiltonspectator.com

Kingston Whig-Standard Edito...

E-mail Address(es): whiged@kin.southam.ca

Kitchener-Waterloo Record

E-Mail Address(es): letters@therecord.com

Kingston Whig-Standard Edito...

E-mail Address(es): whiged@kin.southam.ca

London Free Press

E-mail Address(es): letters@lfpres.com

Macleans Magazine

E-mail Address(es): letters@macleans.ca

Minden Times Newspaper

E-mail Address(es): mindentimes@halhinet.on.ca

Mississauga News

E-mail Address(es): thenews@mississauga.net

Niagara Falls Review

E-mail Address(es): review@nfreview.com

NOW Toronto newsmag

E-mail Address(es): letters@now.com

OwenSound Sun Times

E-mail Address(es): Owstimes@southam.ca

Sault Ste. Marie This Week

E-mail Address(es): thisweek@soonet.ca

Simcoe Reformer Editorial

E-mail Address(es): refedit@annexweb.com

St.Catherines Standard

E-mail Address(es): standard@scs.southam.ca

The Barrie Advance

E-mail Address(es): editor@baradv.on.ca

The Belleville Intelligencer

E-mail Address(es): intel@intranet.on.ca

The Fifth Estate

E-mail Address(es): fifth@toronto.cbc.ca

The Glengarry News

E-mail Address(es): gnews@glen-net.a

The Globe+ Mail

E-mail Address(es): Letters@GlobeAndMail.ca

National Post

E-Mail address(es): [online@nationalpost.com](mailto:online@nationalpost.com)

The Ottawa Sun

E-mail Address(es): [oped@sunpub.com](mailto:oped@sunpub.com)

The Sault Star

E-mail Address(es): [ssmstar@southam.ca](mailto:ssmstar@southam.ca)

The Sudbury Star

E-mail Address(es): [editorial@siteseer.ca](mailto:editorial@siteseer.ca)

The Temiskaming Speaker

E-mail Address(es): [gazette@nt.net](mailto:gazette@nt.net)

The Toronto Star

E-mail Address(es): [lettertoed@thestar.ca](mailto:lettertoed@thestar.ca)

The Toronto Sun

E-mail Address(es): [editor@sunpub.com](mailto:editor@sunpub.com)

The Windsor Star

E-mail Address(es): [letters@win.southam.ca](mailto:letters@win.southam.ca)

Timmins Daily Press

E-mail Address(es): [okarls@timminspress.com](mailto:okarls@timminspress.com)

Woodstock Sentinel Review

E-mail Address(es): [sentinel@annexweb.com](mailto:sentinel@annexweb.com)

Thanks,

Jim Fraser

[jffraser@kwic.com](mailto:jffraser@kwic.com)

[http://members.xoom.com/jffraser/public\\_html/jimfraser.html](http://members.xoom.com/jffraser/public_html/jimfraser.html)

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## **Bill would protect workers from inmates' lawsuits**

**By MATT SMITH**

**Ottaway News Service**

**The Times Herald-Record**

**Tuesday, May25, 1999**

ALBANY - Under state law, correction officers don't have to worry about being sued by inmates for what happens behind prison walls.

However, state mental-health employees who work inside prisons don't enjoy the same protection.

That discrepancy may soon end, as both houses of the state Legislature consider a bill that extends immunity to Office of Mental Health employees from civil litigation in New York courts.

For the Public Employee Federation, which represents mental-health workers, the issue is about equity, said, union spokeswoman Denyce Duncan Lacy.

"These workers face the same dangers as uniform officers, and it's only fair they are given the same kind of protections," she said.

"Here you have a combination of two of the most dangerous elements - criminal behavior and mental illness - and it provides for an unpredictable environment."

Throughout New York, mental-health workers are assigned to "satellite" offices inside state prisons to treat inmates suffering from various types of mental illness.

Duncan Lacy said corrections issues are a major concern to mental-health workers, adding the union fought hard for the bill known as "The Tossing Law," which makes it a felony for inmates to throw human waste at prison personnel - a practice common in correctional facilities.

Sponsored by Senate Correction chair Michael Nozzolio, R-Seneca Falls and by the Assembly Rules Committee the immunity bill is now under review in both legislative houses.

Though details were not immediately available yesterday, lawmakers cited 1993 case in which a lawsuit was filed by a prisoner against correction officers and mental-health workers.

However; because state law did not grant immunity to both groups, the case was dismissed only against the correction officers.

Still, while the proposed law would protect state mental-health workers from paying civil damages to prisoners it would not block inmates from pursuing legitimate legal action if they believe their rights have been violated.

Such cases would be filed in the state's Court of Claims, with New York state listed as the defendant.

### **Legislation at a glance**

**What the legislation does:** Provides immunity from paying civil damages in work-related lawsuits to state Office of Mental Health employees who work inside prisons.

**What's next:** The bill is now before committees in the Assembly and Senate. If released, it would go onto the floor of both houses for a vote. Then, it must be signed by Gov. George Pataki.

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## **Guards Seek New Union:**

Syracuse Herald American Sunday May 23, 1999.

Correction Officers at Auburn Correctional Facility say they're hoping to gain better pay and stronger labor representation when they switch unions this week.

The officers statewide ousted Council 82 of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees as their union and voted to join the independent New York State Correction Officers Police Benevolent Association. The state Public Employment Relations Board is expected to certify the new union Monday. Council 82 did not challenge the vote. "My prime concern was to get away from AFSCME. As Correction Officers, we are very unique, and we need our own representation," Sgt. Greg Redmond said in an interview last week.

Auburn is a maximum security prison and the oldest prison in the state. About 500 Correction Officers oversee about 1,150 inmates. Redmond has worked at the Auburn Prison 27 years and has held a variety of positions with Council 82. He said the new union would work better for Correction Officers because it is composed solely of law enforcement employees.

Council 82 is the statewide arm of AFSCME, an international organization that represents 1.3 million public sector employees from administrative staff to maintenance workers to technicians. The union has represented the correction officers about 30 years. "We need to be independent, looking out for our own needs," said Brian Shanager, president of the new union said from Albany.

Daniel I. Curran, a spokesperson for Council 82 in Albany, questioned whether Shanager's union can deliver on the promises it made to the Correction Officers. "It remains to be seen whether they can actually accomplish those goals...because they do not have the support of any recognized groups in New York State," Curran said. "They seem intent on blaming us for everything. Pretty soon, they'll blame us for the War of 1812," he said.

About 85% of the 24,000 state Correction Officers and Sergeants voted last month. Of that group, 12,135 voted to join the new union, 8,070 voted to stay with Council 82, and 113 voted for neither union, said John Bielowicz, a Correction Officer at Auburn for 11 years. Bielowicz said officers at each state prison will elect union representatives on July 14. He said he wants to help set up the elections, but has yet to decide whether he will seek office. The new union also consists of about 3,000 other law enforcement personnel, including state Park Police and Department of Environmental Conservation police.

Council 82 retained the separate bargaining unit that represents the approximately 800 lieutenants at the state prisons. They voted to stay with Council 82. "I'm not sure what that means. I have mixed emotions. I would have rather switched," Lt. Rod Ashby said. "I can tell you if we don't have a contract by August 1, I'll lead the challenge to switch to NYSCOPBA," said Ashby, who has worked at the AUBURN PRISON 18 YEARS.

The officers' four-year contract expired March 31. They received a salary increase totaling 7 3/4% over the length of the deal. A first-year officer starts at about \$24,000 a year, Redmond said. At 20 years, an officer earns \$44,000 annually. Redmond and Shawn Blowers, and Auburn Correction Officer for four years, said guards deserve better pay and benefits for a job that they said abounds with risk of injury or death. "I have at least 21 years to go," Blowers said. "What I've seen so far is that correction officers' rights and benefits have been going down while the inmates are getting more rights, it seems".

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## Hepatitis C Is Found Rife Among Inmates

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON -- A preliminary study has shown that more than 42,000 Texas inmates, or 28.6 percent of the state's prisoners, could be infected with the virus that causes hepatitis C.

The final figure could "creep up a bit," said Dr. David Smith, the chairman of the state's Correctional Managed Health Care Advisory Committee, which oversees prison health care and conducted the study.

A 1994 study of California prisoners found that 41 percent were infected with the hepatitis C; a more recent study in Maryland showed a 30 percent infection rate.

The Texas results, based on a sampling of 2,600 incoming prisoners, were reported today by The Houston Chronicle.

The study found that rates ran about five percentage points higher at units housing mostly drug abusers, who are vulnerable because of needle use.

Four million Americans are thought to be infected with hepatitis C, most of them without knowing it, and 8,000 to 10,000 people a year die of the disease. Although many people carry the virus for decades without becoming sick, others develop cirrhosis, liver failure or cancer.

In December, experts told prison health officials that treating hepatitis C in Texas prisons would cost a minimum of \$65 million, said Allen Hightower, executive director of Correctional Managed Health Care, the prison system's health maintenance organization.

Dr. Smith, a former Texas health commissioner who presides over the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, said that a more aggressive policy of fighting the illness behind bars would be presented on June 17 to an advisory committee that he heads.

One suggestion will be to treat prisoners with a combination of the drugs interferon and ribavirin, a \$10,000 treatment course. Currently, sick prisoners receive only interferon, which is much cheaper.

The Chronicle reported that several inmates interviewed recently said the infection appeared to be rampant in their units.

"Almost everyone I associate with in here has it," said James Whittington, an inmate at the Ramsey One Unit in Brazoria County.

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## Sergeants shut out???

Walter E. Beverly III  
Rome, NY

May 24, 1999

TO ALL OF MY BROTHER AND SISTER SERGEANTS,



LAST month NYSCOPBA won the right to represent the Security Services Bargaining Unit as our Union. Today, NYSCOPBA was certified as our bargaining unit by PERB.

ACCORDING to the NYSCOPBA Constitution Article VI Section A, the basic unit of the organization will be the sector. The sector will be the work place, i.e. the Correctional Facility, Camp, etc. All members will be in the same "sector" by virtue of working at the work site. This means that we will no longer have a local of our own. Due to this fact, we will not be REPRESENTED in the NYSCOPBA General Assembly as we were represented on the Executive Board of our old Union, Council 82.

WHILE the challenge was on, we were told by NYSCOPBA that we would have at least one steward at the facility (sector). Today, we learned that "promise" was a mistake. We are not going to be guaranteed a stewardship as we were told. We effectively have been shut out of the union.

THE question is are we willing to have our voice in the Union stifled by not having an representation in the General Assembly which is supposed to be the governing body of the union Although we will be able to elect a steward strictly for the Sergeants at the "sector" the Chief Steward is selected by a vote of all of the sector stewards at that work location. The chances of our voice being heard is slim and none. We will no longer be represented at the "governing body" level. Do we wish to accept this level of representation.

AS Sergeants, while often sympathizing at least with the officers if not out right supporting their position, we do have a different labor management need than do the officers.

As NYSCOPBA is constituted, our concerns will be buried and even ignored by management as the officers will serve the interests of the majority of the "sector". Sergeants will not be in that majority. For this reason we need our own representation at the "sector" level which is INDEPENDENT of the officers. We can not afford less.

WE have every right to be heard on this issue and ever other issue that effects us as members of NYSCOPBA. We cannot afford to not be heard as our future with NYSCOPBA is at stake. If NYSCOPBA is to represent us, we will have to have a voice in that representation. We can settle for nothing less than a voice in the General Assembly.

If we do not take this opportunity to make our wishes heard our voice may be lost forever within the NYSCOPBA union. We can not afford to loose this chance. There may not be another chance to gain what we need to be heard within NYSCOPBA.

THE time to get this representation is now. While the organization is in its infancy.

Petitions are enclosed to help us get what we at the very least deserve. Please take the time to sign the petition and pass it around to our fellow sergeants and officers.

Without representation we will become second class members of this new union. Is this what we want?

IF you agree with me on this point, please contact me at either Oneida Correctional Facility or at my home. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Walter E. Beverly III  
Sergeant, Oneida Coriectional Facility

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## Judge Strikes Down Strip-Search Policy at Nassau Jail

By JOHN T. McQUISTON

HAUPPAUGE, N.Y. -- A Federal judge ruled Tuesday that Nassau County's blanket policy of strip-searching everyone arrested and sent to the county jail is unconstitutional.

Judge Leonard D. Wexler found that the Fourth Amendment precludes jail officials from performing such searches on every person sent to the jail, particularly those arrested on a misdemeanor or minor charge like a traffic violation, and those who cannot be reasonably suspected of carrying a concealed weapon or drugs.

The county has 60 days to comply with Judge Wexler's ruling, said Paul F. Millus, a lawyer representing the county, who said he expected many similar lawsuits seeking damages to flood the courts now.

"A Federal judge has issued a ruling, and we will do everything we can to comply," Millus said. "We plan to appeal, because we believe that security considerations at the jail, which is a large, overcrowded facility, requires that all who enter be searched.

One drug or one concealed weapon is one too many inside a jail that handles 14,000 inmates a year."

Millus said jail officials were reviewing the policy and would have a substitute system in place within the time set by the court.

Meanwhile, he said, all prisoners admitted to the jail will continue to be strip-searched.

On any given day, 10 to 20 percent of inmates are in the jail for misdemeanor or lesser charges, he said.

Judge Wexler, in a 10-page decision released late today at Federal District Court here, found in favor of a complaint filed by Ray E. Shain, who was arrested in July 1995 by Nassau County police officers and spent a night in the county jail in East Meadow after being strip-searched.

The suit names one of the police officers, Peter Ellison, and the County Sheriff, Joseph Jablonsky.

Jablonsky said through a spokesman that he would like to review the judge's decision before commenting on future jail policy.

The county jail is at the center of a series of disputes, including a Federal civil rights lawsuit filed last week charging four officers at the jail with the Jan. 8 fatal beating of an inmate, Thomas Pizzuto, 38, a heroin addict who investigators say angered the officers by repeatedly crying out for his methadone treatment.

Shain, who had been embroiled in divorce proceedings and was charged with harassment, a non-felony, after a dispute with his wife, charged that he was a victim of excessive force at the jail and that he was unconstitutionally strip-searched.

Judge Wexler said that because the issue of excessive force was still pending before the court, he would not comment further on that part of the case, which is scheduled to go to trial in August.

But the judge granted Shain's request for summary judgment regarding the constitutionality of the county's blanket strip-search policy.

"While the court is mindful and, indeed, sympathetic, to the legitimate security and safety needs expressed by the Nassau County sheriff, the court is constrained to clear precedent holding that a blanket strip-search policy, such as that practiced by Nassau County, violates the Constitution," the judge wrote.

The judge noted that all individuals searched are told to disrobe completely and to run their fingers through their hair.

A police officer then visually inspects all body areas and openings.

At no time during this inspection are the prisoners touched, the judge said.

Although the searches may last little more than a minute or two, the judge said that Federal courts had ruled in previous cases that such searches of arrestees charged with misdemeanors or minor charges, absent reasonable suspicion of concealed contraband, were unconstitutional, and that the law should extend to the Nassau jail.

He said appeals court rulings had specifically rejected the argument that the mixing of arrestees along with the general jail population justified a blanket search policy.

Judge Wexler said that the county may be liable for civil rights violations if the unconstitutional act resulted in injuries to the plaintiff.

Shain's lawyer, Robert L. Herbst, said that he would leave the question of damages up to a jury. But he said he expected today's ruling by Judge Wexner to lead to numerous lawsuits, if not class action suits, by others similarly stripped-searched at the county jail.

"My client was humiliated by the search and suffered emotionally," Herbst said.

"He also suffered physically when he was handcuffed, but that's a matter yet to be considered by the court. Meanwhile, we couldn't be more pleased with today's ruling."

Millus said that he was pleased that Judge Wexler acknowledged a concern for security at the jail and that the dangers of concealed weapons in a jail of its size were "indeed great." He said the judge also acknowledged the concern of correction officers to protect themselves and other employees as well as the inmates.

Millus said that he remained certain that upon review and appeal, the Nassau system of jail inspections would prevail.

He noted that the jail houses approximately 1,800 inmates on any given day and that they arrive in street clothes from a variety of places throughout Nassau County, and that security is a prime concern.

"A one-minute body search by one person in a closed in area behind a curtain is no inconvenience when you consider the security needs at the jail," he said. "Any street gang member could get himself arrested on a minor charge so he could conceal and smuggle a weapon into the jail to slip it to another gang member.

We have enough trouble with rival gang members in the jail as it is."

"I'm sure there are going to be many lawsuits coming our way because of Judge Wexler's ruling," he said.

"Many people will be wanting to make hay with this."

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## Independence is contagious!

Buffalo News 05-29-99

By Fred O. Williams

Dissident officers at the Erie County Correctional Facility in Alden have mounted a campaign to break with the Civil Service Employees Association, mirroring the move by state corrections officers who formed an independent union last month.

"We're lumped in with 5,000 other county workers - we want our own bargaining unit," said a decertification drive supporter, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

CSEA Local 815 represents about 225 workers at the jail in Alden, of whom about 175 are guards, workers said. The balance are clerical, food and medical workers.

Most county law enforcement personnel belong to the Teamsters union, which represents 600 Sheriff's deputies and non-uniformed clerical workers.

Teamsters guarding the County Holding Center in downtown Buffalo earn between \$2,000 and \$3,000 more than guards at the correctional facility, county and union officials said.

CSEA-represented guards at the Alden prison start at an annual salary of \$30,135 and can earn a maximum of \$43,370 after 20.5 years.

Members of the dissident group are close to filing a "showing of interest" with the Public Employment Relations Board, a step toward holding a vote to oust the CSEA, a member of the group said. The dissidents must show that at least 30 percent of workers in the group favor an election for the vote to go forward.

"This is strictly a union issue - I'm taking a hands-off policy, unless it would impact on the facility," said Frederick Netzel, superintendent of the 800-inmate correctional facility.

Some Teamster-represented Sheriff's deputies work at the correctional facility because of overflow from the downtown holding center, Netzel said. The Alden jail is intended for offenders facing sentences of up to a year, while the holding center is primarily intended for defendants awaiting trial.

The Teamsters, which have a no-raiding agreement with CSEA, are also taking a hands-off approach in the dispute, said Thomas W. Dzedzic, president of Teamsters Local 264.

"I know they're thinking about it," he said of the decertification drive.

The holding center is a maximum-security facility, a higher level of security than the Alden jail, he said.

Officers of CSEA 815, which represents about 5,600 county, town and city workers in Erie County,

wouldn't comment.

State corrections officers voted in April to decertify the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and form their independent union. Dissidents argued that AFSCME bargaining based on clerical jobs was short-changing the dangerous and stressful task of guarding penitentiary inmates. The election affected about 7,000 officers in Western New York.

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## **Request hefty pension bonuses for city Corrections Officers**

Daily News article 4/29/99

With one dissenting vote, the City Council yesterday bucked Mayor Giuliani to request hefty pension bonuses for city Corrections Officers. The Council adopted a home rule resolution calling on Gov. Pataki and the legislature to enact bills granting the pension bonuses to jail guards and superior officers.

The bonuses for future retirees would start at \$8,000 and increase in stages to \$12,500 by 2007. Giuliani called the measure a "legislative giveaway" and vowed to veto it. Mayoral labor experts estimate the pension bonuses could eventually cost \$100 million a year. But backers put the cost at 36 million over the next four fiscal years.

Supporters of the bonus have more than enough votes to override the Republican mayors veto. The sole Council opponent was Queens Democrat Sheldon Leffler, who argued the bonus should be earned through collective bargaining in return for increased productivity--a position also voiced by the mayor.

"This sets a bad precedent" Leffler said. Norman Seabrook, president of the Correction Officers Benevolent Association, said he was confident the bills will fare very well in Albany.

Backers argued that cops and firefighters already have the pension bonus and that the city's 12,000 correction officers deserve "parity." And, they said, the bonus would be paid from excess profits from stock market investments by the city pension system.

"All this is about fairness," said Council speaker Peter Valone (Democrat Queens), whose district includes Rikers Island. "Correction officers have always been treated as stepchildren." Opponents said other city unions will want the same benefit if it's approved in Albany. But Democrat Valone said it should be limited to those workers who "risk their lives everyday."

The correction union backed Pataki for reelection last year against Valone, who is now weighing a mayoral bid in 2001. "It has nothing to do with that," Valone said. "It's just the right thing to do."

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## **Workers Eye Pension Fund Payment**

By BILL FARRELL  
Daily News Staff Writer  
2 June 99

Workers covered by the New York City Employees Retirement System have been trying for years to gain parity with those retired police and firefighters who receive an additional pension payment each December from the Variable Supplement Fund.

That payment, which caps out at \$12,000 in the year 2006, comes from a deal negotiated in 1987.

With the program's fund holding between \$35 billion and \$40 billion, there is a move afoot to provide some sort of supplementary payment for members.

However, at their most recent meeting, the retirement system's trustees voted down a motion to write a letter to the state Legislature asking lawmakers to pass two pending bills that are needed to create a supplementary fund for members.

Mayor Giuliani, the five borough presidents, Controller Alan Hevesi and Public Advocate Mark Green sit on the board along with union representatives.

The mayor has always opposed the idea, so it was no surprise that Staten Island Borough President Guy Molinari, a long-time Giuliani backer, voted against the letter, as did Queens Beep Claire Shulman.

Beeps Howard Golden of Brooklyn, Freddie Ferrer of the Bronx and Virginia Fields of Manhattan, who all have less cordial ties to the mayor, voted to support sending the letter. "It was just a matter of ensuring all members . . . are treated fairly," said Golden.

What surprised some was that Green, who rarely sides with the mayor, also voted against the letter. Green's representative on the board, Laurel Eisner, said the public advocate's office voted no out of fairness.

"Yes, there are two bills in Albany, but only one bill, which only affects Correction Officers (S.2141/A.3688), has the necessary home rule approval from the City Council," Eisner told us.

Under the bill, a supplementary fund would be established using the so-called skim - the difference between the percentage of a fixed rate of return and the return from equity markets.

"We can understand the disappointment expressed by the unions," said Eisner. "But we have to look at the long-term effects of skimming. The markets aren't going to go up forever."

As for the letter, Eisner and others believe the trustees can come up with a new letter that will make everyone happy and be fair to all. "I think we can all work together to find language that would be fair to all and not just one group," Eisner said.

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## **New York State Corrections Emerald Society**

Visit our website for more Information <http://www.webprowl.com/nysces>

The New York State Corrections Emerald Society (NYSCES) was founded on march 17,1999. NYSCES is registered as a nonprofit organization with the Internal Revenue Service

There are four (4) types of membership in the Society; Active, Associate, Social, and Honorary. Gaelic/American, Sworn Peace Officers of this Department (active or retired) join as Associate members. Social membership (non-Gaelic) is open to the public. An Honorary membership is a special recognition bestowed upon an individual by the Brehon Council.

There are approximately ten (10) persons on the Brehon Council. Four (4) members are officers of the corporation. The Brehon Council consists of; President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Four (4) Trustees, and Past President.

There are a number of goals and objectives of the Society.

- -To develop a spirit fraternity amongst our members.
- -To promote Correctional Professionalism and to recognize the accomplishments of Gaelic/American, Corrections employees.
- -To assist needy members and aid their families in the event of a line of duty death.

All members receive a monthly newsletter, lapel pin and window decal, Scholarship Funds and Death Benefits are afforded to Active, Associate, and Social members.

The New York State Corrections Emerald Society has quarterly meetings and several functions a year; including, but not exclusively, Golf outing, Fishing trip, St. Patick's day parade, Christmas

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