



OPPOSE

A2277 (Aubry) / S2836 (Salazar)

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) OPPOSES the passage of this legislation

This legislation would amend the correction law, in relation to restricting the use of segregated confinement and creating alternative therapeutic and rehabilitative confinement options.

While this legislation might be well intentioned, it shows a lack of understanding about the use of segregated confinement in New York's criminal justice system. In order to maintain a safe and secure environment in the correctional system – an environment that protects both the inmate population and the staff who work in these facilities – from time-to-time bad actors and repeat offenders need to be removed from the general population. This legislation would only exacerbate the ongoing problem of inmate violence by removing one of the tools of maintaining a safe correctional facility.

Our union represents State Corrections Lieutenants who help manage the 49 State Correctional facilities that are currently in operation. These 500 Lieutenants are seasoned correctional staff who understand how these facilities work and who could be helpful in crafting alternatives to segregated confinement, including the use of more educational programming for inmates and alternative disciplinary strategies.

Most state correctional facilities simply do not have the capacity to accommodate the new standards required by this legislation. It will take serious investment in both the infrastructure of the facilities and the staff who work in these facilities to meet these new requirements. The “do more with less” mentality that has prevailed in corrections for so many years will need to be adjusted. Significant new investments in staff, training and the physical overhaul of current facilities will need to be made, or this legislation will simply be unworkable.

On behalf of the more than 400,000 public and non-profit workers that AFSCME represents in New York State, including thousands of members who work in correctional facilities, our union OPPOSES the passage of this bill.