

**Calling On The New York State Legislature And Governor To Amend
The New York State Humane Alternatives To Long-Term Solitary
Confinement (HALT) Act**

WITHDRAWN BY SPONSORS

Referred to: The Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee (Chairwoman Hansut and Legislators Clinton, Hewitt, Levine, Maloney, McCollough and Walls)

Chairwoman of the Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee, Gina Hansut, Legislator Richard Walls, and Legislators Corcoran, Kovacs, Kitchen, Lopez, Maloney, and Roberts offer the following:

WHEREAS, on March 31, 2021, the Governor signed into law S.2836/A2277-A, known as the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement (HALT) Act, with an effective date of April 1, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the HALT Act limits segregated [disciplinary] confinement of inmates to the Special Housing Unit (SHU) or in a separate keeplock housing unit to a maximum of fifteen (15) consecutive days, or twenty (20) total days within any sixty (60) day period; and

WHEREAS, under the HALT Act, these time limits may not be meaningfully extended even where an inmate has committed such serious acts as attempted escape, physical or sexual assault on staff and other inmates, or even homicide; and

WHEREAS, assaults in NYS prisons have increased 124% over the last 10 years, reaching a record number of 1,173 assaults on staff in 2021; and

WHEREAS, since the HALT Act went into effect on April 1, 2022, the number of daily assaults in NYS correctional facilities has gone up from 6.8 to 8.1 a day, an increase of 25%; and

WHEREAS, the HALT Act essentially eliminates any meaningful disciplinary sanctions for inmates who commit violent acts; and

WHEREAS, convicted murderers, career violent criminals, and other dangerous inmates already serving life sentences in particular now have virtually no significant disincentive to commit violent acts while incarcerated; and

WHEREAS, by eliminating serious disciplinary sanctions for violent acts committed by inmates in NYS correctional facilities, the HALT Act has effectively incentivized such violent acts; and

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WHEREAS, the HALT Act has thereby contributed to an increasingly violent environment within NYS correctional facilities, thereby endangering the Correction Officers, civilian staff, and inmates within such facilities; and

WHEREAS, even prior to the enactment of the HALT Act, confinement to the SHU did not constitute true "solitary confinement," and could only be imposed subject to significant procedural safeguards, including notice and a hearing; and

WHEREAS, further, prior to the enactment of the HALT Act, inmates confined to SHU had access to outdoor recreation, personal visits, and commissary; and

WHEREAS, the HALT act prohibits segregated confinement for "special populations", if the inmate is 21 years or younger, which is typically the most unpredictable and violent population; and

WHEREAS, the HALT act is causing meaningful programs for general population inmates to be canceled due to lack of staff; the staff that should be instructing these programs are being redeployed to cover the HALT law mandated programs, thus punishing the general population inmates that are complying with facility rules, which causes more idle time and friction inside the facility; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature calls upon the New York State Legislature and the Governor to enact immediately legislation amending S.2836/A.2277-A, known as the HALT Act, and restoring the prior inmate disciplinary framework, which provided for meaningful disciplinary sanctions to deter violent conduct by inmates, while also respecting inmates' procedural and personal rights; and, be it further

RESOLVED, the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Kathy Hochul, State Senator Julia Salazar, Chair of the Crime Victims, Crime and Correction Committee, Assembly Member Erik M. Dilan, Chair of the Assembly Correction Committee, New York State Senate and Assemblymembers representing Ulster County, and the New York State Association of Counties to encourage member counties to enact similar resolutions,

and moves its adoption.

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ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

Passed Committee: Law Enforcement and Public Safety as amended on April 2, 2025

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE