



New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

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Still On Course

Well, two more days behind us in the Binding Arbitration Process. The past two days, November 29 and 30, 2005, were the States' days to put on their case.


The State's first witness was Deputy Commissioner Lucien Leclaire who gave testimony with regard to our jobs, Training Academy curriculum, the jobs we perform at the different facilities and the additional duties preformed after September 11th -- specifically, watershed details and added coverage at the State Capitol. When Mr. Leclaire was asked about the jobs we do, he stated: "I don't want to down play the jobs that other State employees do but we perform the toughest job by far." He further stated that we have a critical role within the Department of Corrections.

The second witness was Seren Hrachian, Associate Director of the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER). He testified on background information based on his experience with regard to collective bargaining and briefly touched on the rationale of the State's proposal to basically free up some money in one area to distribute it to another in order to save the State money. It was that simple.

On day two, Jim Schepperly, Deputy Superintendent for the New York State Police, attempted to make distinct differences between the New York State Police and us. It is our opinion that he actually showed more comparisons. Examples: K9 Units, Demonstration/Riot Units. Mike Axelrod brought up an interesting fact that BOTH the New York State Police and the New York State Department of Corrections are recognized around the country as elite groups and Mr. Schepperly agreed.

The second witness was Mike Volforte, Associate Director from GOER, who gave testimony with regard to the history of negotiations with the State Police -- specifically the longevity steps, commenting that it is a give and take process. He admitted that the Binding Arbitration Process created a great distance between us and the State Police. In his testimony, Mr. Volforte referred to the first arbitration award received by the State Troopers after they got binding arbitration by a panel chaired by arbitrator Martin F. Scheinman. During the questioning of Mr. Volforte, he acknowledged that the State Troopers did not achieve all of their goals in that first award and that they have reached their present degree of salary separation from State Correction Officers only after ten years of having had binding arbitration.

Finally, Richard Ahl, a financial expert from GOER, gave testimony to the dollar amount of the proposals submitted by NYSCOPOBA at the beginning of contract negotiations. His testimony indicated that our proposals would result in a total one-time cost to the State, covering both years, an additional \$696 million dollars to our present \$960 million dollar unit payroll.

Lawrence Flanagan, Jr. 
President