



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

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April 13, 2009

**HAND DELIVERED** April 14, 2009

Dear Commissioner Fischer:

I am writing to you in connection to the letter written to New York State employees from Governor Patterson dated April 7, 2009, copies of which have been posted and distributed to our members in facilities throughout the State. For reasons that are explained below, we request that you cease the practice of distributing these notices and that they be removed from all of the Department's work locations.

As you know, NYSCOPBA's members have not seen a general salary increase in more than three years. We are currently engaged in interest arbitration proceedings with the State to resolve the impasse in contract negotiations with regard to more than 20,000 of our members for fiscal years 2007-08 and 2008-09. When those proceedings have ended, we expect that negotiations will resume with the State regarding terms and conditions of employment for fiscal years 2009-10 and 2010-11. If the State wants to discuss workforce savings and other fiscal issues, the place to do so is at the negotiations table not in letters to our members.

NYSCOPBA and its members are well aware of the current recession and the resulting pressures that have been placed on the State's fiscal resources. During the previous fiscal year our members were compelled to assume greater responsibilities as a result of the elimination (by attrition) of permanent positions and the consolidation of facilities. This action resulted in nearly a 2% reduction in correction officers statewide. With the recently-enacted 2009-2010 budget, we now face further consolidations, including the closure of several camps. It also appears that large numbers of layoffs are targeted from among the members of this bargaining unit. It cannot be said that our members haven't already shared in the sacrifices that must be made in difficult financial times.

NYSCOPBA is at all times ready and willing to meet with you and other representatives of the State to discuss any and all issues involving the current fiscal crisis. We ask only that the State respect the process by dealing directly with me and the other elected members of NYSCOPBA's Executive Board. Any other approach will not be productive.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Very truly yours,

Donn Rowe, President