

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 20, 2012
Contact: Morgan Hook, 301-801-6949

ATTACK AT FIVE POINTS CORRECTIONAL FACILITY LEAVES 2 INJURED

An inmate serving a sentence for multiple counts of sexual violence attacked corrections officers at Five Points Correctional Facility in Romulus, leaving two injured. The incident took place on Tuesday, as Carlos Abreu stabbed two officers with a ball point pen in an unprovoked attack following his suicide attempt, which had been stopped by security staff.

Abreu – who is serving time for assault, rape and attempted rape – was taken to the correctional facility infirmary following his thwarted suicide attempt. Once there, and pretending to be unconscious, Abreu's restraints were removed so physicians could give him an x-ray. Abreu responded by grabbing a pen and twice stabbing one officer in the hand, and stabbing another officer in the leg. Abreu also attacked other corrections officers, but was restrained before he could injure any other officers. The two injured officers remain out of work as they recover from the incident.

Al Mothershed, Western Regional VP for NYSCOPBA, said: "Our members come to work and face this kind of violence. Were it not for the courageous actions of the corrections officers in the infirmary, this incident could have been much worse. But the public needs to know what we're up against every day we go to work."

Donn Rowe, president of NYSCOPBA, said: "The men and women of NYSCOPBA serve the public in one of the most difficult and dangerous jobs in New York State. We are on the front line of public safety everyday. And as we have argued for months, the system is at a breaking point. This is just the latest incident of violence against corrections officers we have seen in New York."

Recently, four separate incidents of inmates attacking corrections officers took place in the North Country over the course of 10 days from December into January, underscoring a steady rise in violence inside the New York State correctional system. The incidents, which took place at Mt. McGregor Correctional Facility, Saratoga County, and at the Franklin Correctional Facility and Upstate Correctional Facility, both in Malone, left 11 corrections officers with injuries.

New York State's prison system has seen a significant rise in violence over the years as the prison population has become more violent and statewide cutbacks have created increasingly crowded and often dangerous conditions. Roughly 21,000 New York State Correctional Officers and Police Benevolent Association members work in prisons and other security environments, and violence at those facilities not only puts corrections officers at risk, but also the public at large.