



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

"Keeping New York Safe"

NYSCOPBA Thanks Franklin County District Attorney for Prosecuting Inmate Charged in Upstate Correctional Facility Killing, Calls for End to Double Bunking

Union urges state lawmakers to prioritize correctional officer safety and eliminate double bunking in New York's prisons during upcoming legislative session

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ALBANY, N.Y. — The New York State Correctional Officers and Police Benevolent Association (NYSCOPBA) is thanking Franklin County District Attorney's Office for pursuing prosecution in the April 2026 killing of an inmate's bunkmate at Upstate Correctional Facility and calling on the New York State Legislature to eliminate double bunking in state prisons during the upcoming legislative session.

The death of an inmate at Upstate Correctional Facility underscores the serious safety concerns that arise when two individuals are housed together in a confined prison cell. NYSCOPBA is urging state lawmakers to address these risks directly by ending the practice of double bunking and ensuring that correctional facilities have the resources and policies necessary to maintain safe and secure environments for staff and inmates alike.

"NYSCOPBA thanks the Franklin County District Attorney for pursuing this prosecution and recognizing the seriousness of a killing that occurred inside a New York State correctional facility," said NYSCOPBA President Chris Summers. "Accountability is essential when a life is taken, and we appreciate the work being done to pursue justice in this case."

"However, prosecution after a tragedy does not address the underlying conditions that can contribute to violence inside our prisons. Placing two individuals in the small cell creates additional risks that correctional officers must manage every day, often in facilities already facing significant staffing shortages and other operational challenges." – stated Dana Grammo, Northern Region Vice President.

Andrew Hernandez, 43, plead guilty in Franklin County Court to Murder 1st and was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. In April of 2026, he strangled his 51-year-old cellmate with a shoelace during an altercation.

At the time of the murder, Hernandez was serving a 19-year to life sentence for shooting and killing his mother in 2001 in Guilderland, NY. He was an 18-year-old senior at Guilderland High School when he shot his mother in the back of the head and went to a movie afterward at a local mall before turning himself into police.

He was scheduled for a parole hearing in December when he killed his cellmate.

The union is calling on state lawmakers to make the elimination of double bunking a priority in the upcoming legislative session and to develop a responsible plan to address prison capacity, housing assignments and the resources needed to implement this change.

NYSCOPBA will continue to advocate for policies that promote accountability, reduce violence, and improve safety in New York's correctional facilities.