

**A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY  
LEGISLATOR MILLS**

**Re: Opposition to the Expedited Closure of the Gowanda Prison**

**WHEREAS**, Governor Cuomo and the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) announced, in December of last year, their decision to close the medium security Gowanda Correctional Facility. The decision was made based on the expected savings of \$89 million per year; and

**WHEREAS**, the Gowanda facility is the second-largest facility in the state with more than 510 corrections officers and another 130 civilian employees and currently has extensive renovations contracts already awarded and scheduled to be conducted; and

**WHEREAS**, the 90-day timeline to notify employees is also severely shortened from a typical decision to close a prison. Most decisions to close a correctional facility require at least a one-year notice to employees and an opportunity to study the impact and cost savings; and

**WHEREAS**, with the shortened timeline, proper examination of the purported savings has not been conducted. The Gowanda Area Redevelopment Corp. submitted a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request in January to the DOCCS requesting budget figures for related to the decision to close the prison; and

**WHEREAS**, facility prisoners will need to be transferred to other corrections facilities, many of the corrections officers will need to be transferred as opposed to terminated, and the physical building and surrounding grounds will still need to be properly decommissioned by the state; and

**WHEREAS**, the 90-day timeline also impacts the ability of the nearly 700 employees who do not know whether they will be transferred, terminated, or able to find other employment; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a strong possibility that the projected savings will not be as great as promised; however, the harm to the community supporting the prison will be significant. As the FOIL request has yet to be fulfilled and a thorough review has not been conducted, it is imperative that any facility closure be suspended pending a formal review and the typical one-year notice period be provided.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT**

**RESOLVED**, that this honorable body hereby urges Governor Cuomo to halt the closure of the Gowanda Correctional Facility pending a full and complete inquiry into the actual savings to be had, the regional impact it would have on the community, and the closure's implications for the New York State prison system; and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo, the director of the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, the Western New York Delegation to the New York State Senate and Assembly, and any other party deemed necessary and proper.

Fiscal Impact: None