



New York State
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
FEDERATION AFL-CIO
LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT
100 State Street, Suite 1070
Albany, NY 12207

Kenneth Brynien, *President*

1-800-724-4997
1-518-432-4003
Fax: 1-518-432-7739

Arlea Igoe, *Secretary Treasurer*

SUPPORT

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The New York State Public Employees Federation, representing 58,000 Professional, Scientific, and Technical workers of New York State, supports this legislation.

In November 1998, Judith Scanlon, an Intensive Case Manager employed by the State Office of Mental Health, was murdered in the line of duty while visiting a mentally ill patient in Buffalo. The patient, who was being followed in a community setting as part of an outpatient mental health program, has been convicted of the killing.

The purpose of this legislation is to reduce the risk of similar tragedies in the future. The bill provides that an OMH employee who is required to visit a seriously mentally ill patient in their home or other community setting has the right to ask to be accompanied by another worker if they reasonably believe there is a risk of violence. The bill further requires annual training in violence prevention and safety procedures for intensive case managers. In order to make these basic precautions realistic, the bill requires that OMH maintain a ratio of no more than twelve patients to each intensive case manager. This is the ratio that is recommended by OMH for the intensive case management program, but staffing cuts have caused the caseload to grow too high for safe management.

Adoption of this bill will not completely eliminate the risk faced every day by mental health workers, but it will at least acknowledge that we can and must respond to this tragedy by adding safety precautions that will protect both workers and the public.

For these reasons, the Public Employees Federation urges you to support this legislation.

For more information, please contact:

Brian F. Curran, Legislative Director and Counsel