



MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

A.6665-B (Gottfried)

S.4495-A (Duane)

AN ACT to amend the Public Health Law, the Education Law and the Labor Law, in relation to prohibiting participation in torture and improper treatment of prisoners by health care professionals.

On behalf of the Committee of Interns and Residents/SEIU Healthcare, the nation's oldest and largest housestaff union representing 13,000 resident physicians across the country -- 5,000 in New York State -- we write in strong support of **A.6665-B (Gottfried)/S.4495-A (Duane)** which would prohibit participation in the torture and mistreatment of prisoners by healthcare professionals.

CIR resident physicians have a long history of not only serving on the front lines of care in safety-net hospitals, but being on the leading edge of policy work and advocacy for improving working conditions for healthcare professionals and enhancing the quality and safety of care for the patients we serve. CIR members have done so out of a sense of obligation to live up to the Hippocratic ideal of "first, do no harm" and reflecting the professional and ethical behavior we believe all physicians are called to adhere to. It is that same sense of obligation and that same ethical standard that calls us to repudiate those instances where physicians have been involved in the torture and mistreatment of prisoners.

We join the many other organizations of healthcare professionals in offering our endorsement for the legislation proposed by our friends and champions, New York State Assemblyman Richard Gottfried and State Senator Tom Duane. Their bill would bring ethical clarity to situations which may lead to the inhumane treatment of prisoners. Their bill would provide support to physicians in trying circumstances who wish to report cases of torture or suspected torture. Their bill would protect physicians, protect patients, and protect the professional values of our chosen career in medicine.

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