

# Senate Passes Historic Prison Staff Safety Enhancement Act

THOMSON, IL, UNITED STATES, April 30, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a significant victory for correctional officer safety, the U.S. Senate has passed the [Prison Staff Safety Enhancement Act](#) (S.307), marking a decisive step forward in protecting federal prison staff nationwide. The bipartisan legislation, spearheaded by Senator Marsha Blackburn, addresses critical safety concerns that have long plagued correctional facilities.



The bill's passage represents a transformative moment for prison staff protection, particularly in addressing sexual misconduct by inmates. At Thomson Federal Prison alone, female staff reported over 1,600 incidents of inmate sexual misconduct between 2019 and 2023 — incidents that previously had no clear path to federal prosecution.

"We thank Senator Ernst for joining Senator Blackburn in leading the charge to protect correctional officers from harassment and sexual attacks by inmates," said Jon Zumkehr, President of the Thomson Employees Union Local 4070, which represents correctional officers. "This bill represents an important first step, and we look forward to working with them on this and future legislation to ensure a safer workplace for all our members."

The Act establishes three key provisions:

- Mandating a comprehensive Department of Justice Office of Inspector General review of sexual harassment and assault incidents against Bureau of Prisons staff
- Requiring the Attorney General to report findings to Congress
- Directing the establishment of national standards for prevention, reduction, and punishment of sexual assault and harassment of BOP staff

"Our corrections officers put their lives on the line every day to keep our communities safe," said [Senator Joni Ernst](#) (R-Iowa). "They deserve to work in an environment where their dignity and

safety are protected under federal law."

The bill, which garnered strong support from both the [National Fraternal Order of Police](#) and AFGE Local 4070, addresses a long-standing gap in federal law that left staff vulnerable to repeated harassment without adequate legal recourse.

The legislation now moves to the House of Representatives, where it is expected to receive broad bipartisan support. AFGE Local 4070 continues to work closely with legislators to ensure swift passage into law.

#### About AFGE Local 4070

The American Federation of Government Employees Local 4070 represents federal correctional officers and staff, advocating for their safety, rights, and working conditions in federal prison facilities.

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