



“I worked for Corcraft for 10 years, building the very chairs that our legislators in Albany sit on as they write our laws. I was forced to do backbreaking work—though the most I ever made was 45 cents an hour. If that’s not slavery, what is?”

— **Wilfredo Laracunte**

13th Forward Campaign Leader, Educator, and Formerly Incarcerated Advocate

## 13<sup>TH</sup> Forward is working to end modern-day slavery in New York’s prisons and jails

13th Forward is a statewide coalition of organizers, directly impacted individuals, faith leaders, and workers’ and criminal legal reform advocates. We are advancing the **No Slavery in NY Act** and the **Fairness & Opportunity for Incarcerated Workers Act** because we believe that liberty and opportunity are New York values, not slavery and exploitation.

### The Problem

Incarcerated people make furniture for SUNY and CUNY schools, eyeglasses, trash cans and government office furniture. It is very likely that when you call the department of motor vehicles, you are talking to someone incarcerated at the Bedford Women’s Facility. In addition, the many jobs that keep the prison system running—everything from food services, to general cleaning, to library staffing, to extremely dangerous jobs like asbestos and lead paint removal—could not be done without the labor of people imprisoned and forced to work by the state.

Punishments for refusing to work include solitary confinement, loss of family visitation, and extended incarceration through loss of good time credits.

Incarcerated workers in NY are paid slave wages that range from just 10–65 cents/hour. The exploitation of these workers, a disproportionate number of whom are Black and Brown, has real and lasting impacts on their families. In fact, 1 in 3 families go into debt supporting a loved one in prison.

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“Liberty and opportunity are New York values. It is time for us to guarantee the freedom from forced labor for all New Yorkers.”

— **State Senator Zellnor Myrie (D-20)**

“It’s a slave/master kind of relationship.”

— **JD, currently incarcerated worker**

“It’s impossible to send money home. As a mother and grandmother, I feel inadequate.”

— **BN, currently incarcerated worker**



[@13thForwardNY](https://www.instagram.com/13thForwardNY)

# The Solution

## The No Slavery in New York Act (S225/A3412) would:

- 1 Add an abolition amendment to New York's constitution, ending the exception that allows for modern-day slavery for people incarcerated in New York's prisons and jails
- 2 Expressly prohibit the use of force, threats of force, and any other threats of punishment as means to compel the labor of incarcerated people

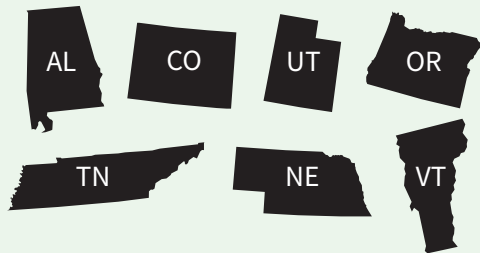
## The Fairness & Opportunity for Incarcerated Workers Act (S.416A/A.3481B-2022#s) would:

- 1 Provide a fair minimum wage for all incarcerated workers
- 2 Establish a prison labor board to ensure that all labor programs provide quality vocational and occupational training and create viable pathways to employment post release
- 3 Mandate basic labor protections, including safe and healthy working conditions and the right to form a union

“Today, states are acting to amend their own constitutions to end slavery and guarantee freedom from forced labor under any circumstances, once and for all. In New York, we must do the same.”  
— **Assemblymember Harvey Epstein (D-74)**

# New York Lags Behind

Seven states have ended slavery as punishment for a crime in their state constitutions since 2018.



**In the interests of worker justice, racial justice and human rights, the time to take action is now. We must pass the No Slavery in New York Act and the Fairness and Opportunity for Incarcerated Workers Act.**



## Coalition Leaders

