



CUOMO SIGNS UTILITY WORKER ASSAULT BILL INTO LAW

August 19, 2016

Statement from President James T. Slevin , Local 1-2, NY, UWUA, AFL-CIO:

It is now a felony in New York State to assault a Utility Worker performing an essential service. This is good news for Local 1-2 members and all utility workers in the State. It has been a long time coming.

It has been a drawn out battle with numerous trips to Albany by our Local, the Brothers and Sisters at IBEW, and many others over the years to see this day arrive.

For too long, Utility Workers have been deemed "essential" only when there is a devastating man-made or natural disaster that knocks out power. Then we become 'First Responders'. Just remember the 6,000 miles of cable we put down in the days after 9/11 in the middle of a smoking ruin if you need proof.

Or our response to Superstorm Sandy when whole communities were destroyed.

We would like to thank Queens Assemblyman Francisco Moya for shepherding this into Law. And Sen. William Larkin of Newburgh for carrying it through the State Senate.

Our Members face the same dangers every day that Police and Firefighters face, whether it's entering a filthy drug den, confronting armed homeowners or just being out on the streets 24/7. Guns have been pulled on Members, knives have been waved and some have been shot and stabbed. And we do this at the same time that many of us are working with deadly, live electricity.

It is dangerous and thankless work and our Members deserve all the protection that the Law can provide.

It is more than doing the 'Right Thing.' It is about safety and letting us carry on our vital work unmolested.