



**New York City Correction Retirees
Benevolent Association
P.O. Box 364
Northport, New York 11768**



*Chartered in the State of New York
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E-Mail: NYCCRBA@YAHOO.COM*

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Dear Fellow Retiree:

We hope this letter finds you and your family in the best of health. We are writing to you to introduce our retiree organization, the New York City Correction Retirees Benevolent Association (*NYCCRBA*), which is made up of retired members of the New York City Department of Correction, uniform and civilian, all ranks and titles, like yourself. We would like it clearly understood, when we retire we end our “*rank*” status. We are all one, “*Retiree’s*”. We all have a common goal, and that is our “*Retiree Benefits*”. This organization is making every effort to be the conduit to protect our present benefits, and hopefully secure future benefits.

As you have probably become aware since you retired, once you are retired, New York City tends to forget about you. You, as well as the rest of your fellow retirees, no longer have any say regarding our benefits. It has always been difficult getting answers from officialdom, including the various unions that once represented us. Like many retirees of other city agencies, our founding brothers, Arthur Cinotti, Donald Cranston and David Delaney thought it was time to start a retiree organization for all correction retirees. In 1993, they recruited about 50 retirees by word of mouth, and in little over a year, the newborn organization grew to about 100 members. In 1994, our organization was chartered by the State of New York; by-laws were written, and an executive board was empowered. Since that time our organization has grown to over 850 members, and we continue to grow into the future. We are currently affiliated with the Council of Municipal Retiree Organizations (COMRO) which consists of 35 retiree groups, representing over 200,000 retirees from other city agencies as well as members of The Alliance for Retired Americans, representing retirees nationwide.

Our organization is primarily a fraternal organization; it is **NOT** a union. Since coming into existence, however, we have been keeping an eye on those issues that are of interest to all Correction Retirees, such as, our benefits, new initiatives in the New York State Legislature and the New York City Council, as well as on a variety of other fronts. Our goal in following these issues is to protect the benefits we have, to prevent them from being eroded, and to take the initiative to improve them wherever possible. ***Do you know of anyone else who is fighting to protect our benefits? We don’t!***

Over the past several years the *NYCCRBA* has filed lawsuits on behalf of Correction Retirees addressing issues such as the transfer of \$2.5 million from the COBA’s Retiree Security Benefits Fund to the Active Employee Security Benefits Fund. In this case the transfer depleted the fund almost to the point of insolvency. While the lawsuit was dismissed, our actions contributed to most of the funds being returned to the Retiree Security Benefits Fund.

In our other litigation, we sued the City and the New York City Employees Retirement System (NYCERS) concerning the payment of a Defined Benefit from the NYCERS Pension which could cause the NYCERS Pension to be placed out of compliance with the IRS tax codes. In other words, if in fact the NYCERS Pension falls out of IRS tax code compliance, all pensioners under the NYCERS Pension would be required to pay Federal, State and City taxes on the pension monies received from NYCERS. Our only objective was, and presently remains, to protect all retiree's (including those receiving the defined benefit) from such a tax burden. This organization never sued to prevent anyone from receiving the Defined Benefit (VSF).

Other issues championed by our association include strategies to hold the line on the rising cost of prescription drugs for retirees, including both those retirees who are Medicare eligible and those retirees who are not yet on Medicare. Recently the Federal government passed a new prescription drug plan for Medicare recipients that will take effect in 2006. We are guarding against what we believe will be an attempt by New York City to drop the current prescription coverage options for all retirees that are on, or will be on Medicare in 2006. We have also been exploring other affordable prescription drug options so that if this happens, our retirees will be able to make intelligent decisions based on knowledge of what is available. We also obtain annually, through the Freedom of Information Act both the COBA and CCA E.R.I.S.A. reports (both active and retired) that must file with the Government annually. Obtaining these reports annually enables us to keep track of the money the City gives each union for the Welfare Security Funds for retiree's and how the monies are being spent on benefits for the retiree.

This organization holds monthly meetings which serve a dual purpose; first and foremost – we offer the opportunity for retirees to stay in touch with each other; and second – the meetings provide the opportunity to update our membership about the activities of the organization in those important areas that effect retirees. Our meetings are held every third Monday of each month, excluding July and August, at the American Legion Hall located at 107-15 Metropolitan Avenue, Forest Hills, NY; phone 718-520-8623.

Each month, with the exception of July and August, we send out a newsletter to all association members. The newsletter provides a wealth of useful information on issues followed by the organization, current retiree news, and reminders for meetings and other activities such as the parties we sponsor. We currently have many out-of-state members who look forward to being kept up-to-date on the various retiree issues.

In order to continue to achieve our stated goals, and to continue to expand our membership base, we are reaching out to you and as many other retirees as possible. We believe that there is strength in numbers, and that together we can overcome any obstacle that comes our way. Any organization, including this one, is only as strong as the membership it represents. Currently, we have been recognized by many other organizations through our efforts as being a **“hands-on”** organization in retiree representation.

As we all know well what happen during our active service when different factions would cause dissension in the so-call unions that represented us. Well, we do not have time for that nonsense anymore. Remember, we are all one, **Retiree's** and we need to be even more **“united”** that ever, in order to protect the most important issue that remains, **“Retiree Benefits”**. None of us can afford to lose that which we worked so hard and sacrificed for, **Our Retiree Benefits**.

Membership dues are \$25.00 a year. In addition to providing for all the necessary and routine expenses to keep the organization running, (mailings, stamps, copies, labels supplies etc) it also covers the cost of our two annual parties that members attend free. Over the years many of our out-of-state members have made it in for our parties. These two events provide an ideal opportunity to stay in touch with and see many old friends. Your Executive Board works hard to hold down the costs of operating the organization, and a detailed financial statement is sent out to all members each and every year accounting for all expenditures.

Enclosed is an application for membership in the **NYCCRBA**. We would love for you to join us and become a part of this growing organization. Please fill out the application and return it to the PO Box address at the top of this letter along with your check for \$25.00 made payable to **NYCCRBA**. Your membership cards will be sent upon receipt of your dues. Additionally, you will be added to our membership mailing list and begin receiving your newsletters.

All the members of the Executive Board wish you and your family the very best, and hope that your retirement is truly a fulfilling time in your life. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you.

Fraternally,

Anthony Arfi
Chairman

Kevin Calabrese
Legislative Chairman

Gene Duca
Treasurer