



Press RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Benny Boscio Jr.
President

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Statement From COBA President Benny Boscio on the Fire at the NIC Facility on Rikers Island Last Night

"For over a year, COBA has alerted the public, the Department of Correction, and our public officials about the dangerous conditions in our jails caused by the Department's failure to hire enough officers to be able to respond and prevent emergencies such as the fire at NIC that was started by inmates. The fire started late Friday evening after a Correction Officer was splashed in the face by an inmate. The officer's supervisor escorted him to the medical clinic to be treated for the splashing. While at the clinic, an inmate started a fire that spread rapidly and officers and supervisors immediately contacted the Fire Department to put out the fire. Three Correction Officers and two Captains were treated at Mt. Sinai Hospital for smoke inhalation. The department's failure to hire more officers has turned our jails into ticking time bombs that will explode at any minute. On top of not hiring enough staff, the department isn't even giving refresher classes in fire safety to the officers we do have. Commissioner Schiraldi's mismanagement has put thousands of lives in jeopardy and yet he continues to scapegoat us for the problems caused by his mismanagement. It's time for our elected officials to demand that the DOC hire the 2,000 officers we desperately need before someone gets killed!"

Benny Boscio Jr.
COBA President

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