



SEIUHealthcare
United for Quality Care

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The images of what happened to J'Allen Jones are horrific and deeply disturbing. On behalf of our members, we extend our condolences to his family and loved ones.

DOC healthcare workers are helpers and healers who come to work every day to provide care. There is not a day that goes by in Connecticut's prison system when our members are not involved in saving a life. Whether it's an incarcerated individual, a fellow medical professional, a visitor, or a correctional officer, our members are at the forefront of lifesaving care every single day. This truth bears repeating: our members save lives every day.

With that knowledge firmly in place, we understand that in this incident, knowing that even when medical staff did everything right, it is of little comfort to a family still grieving an unbearable loss. No healthcare worker ever wants to see someone lose their life while incarcerated and away from their loved ones. For many incarcerated individuals, the first time a serious illness is identified is in the prison intake setting, a reflection of broader systemic failures in our society. In these moments, our nurses and other healthcare workers provide critical treatment that can give people the chance to heal. Mental health workers also play a vital role, offering support that can prevent suicide or self-harm and helping individuals build stability in the hope of recovery. In the most urgent situations, our members respond to life-threatening and trauma crises.

Our members know the conditions inside the Department of Correction and are heroic in working from within to make a broken system better. For over four decades, the state has continually divested funds from community health centers, mental health care, and other essential supports for working families. When the state fails to invest in the community services meant to serve as safety nets, the suffering does not end; it moves behind prison walls. For decades, we have warned the state that without real investment in our communities and in our correctional healthcare lives would be at risk. Those warnings have gone unheeded.

We believe incarceration is not the end of a life or its contributions. We believe everyone, no matter their past, deserves dignity. We believe the racial and economic injustices that scar our society become unmistakably clear in our prison system, where they are often too obvious to deny. We also believe that change is possible-but only if our elected leaders work to improve policies and investments in our communities, from mental health access to community health programs, safe staffing in state-run facilities, and improved conditions for both workers and those they are treating. We know that most of the individuals we care for will return home, and they deserve the chance to be healthy, to rejoin their communities, and to rebuild their lives. We believe reform cannot wait.

And so, we must speak up.

In solidarity,

Rob Baril, President, SEIU 1199NE