

**New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision**  
**Testimony before the Senate Crime Victim, Crime and Correction Committee**  
**and the Senate Finance Committee**  
**Daniel F. Martuscello III, Acting Commissioner**  
**May 22, 2024**

Good morning, Chair Salazar, Chair Krueger, and distinguished members of the Senate. I am Dan Martuscello, Acting Commissioner for the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. It is my honor to be nominated by Governor Hochul for confirmation as the Commissioner of DOCCS. I care deeply about this Department, its workforce, and the individuals we supervise, and am humbled by the Governor's faith in me to lead this agency.

I was born and raised in nearby Troy, New York, and joined this agency as a second-generation correction professional. My father retired after 46 years of service as the Superintendent of Coxsackie Correctional Facility. My parents instilled in my siblings and me the value of public service, and I credit them for my passion for this work. I have been married for over 25 years and have two children. I thank my family for their love and support throughout my career, without which I would not be here today.

I am a graduate of SUNY Cortland, where I earned a bachelor's degree in Sociology, with a concentration in Criminology. Following my graduation, I began my career with the Department in 1997. I served as a Correction Officer prior to transitioning to administrative services, where I held a variety of titles, including Director of Human Resources and Deputy Commissioner for Administrative Services. I was later promoted to Executive Deputy Commissioner, where I served until my appointment as Acting Commissioner. I am a member of the American Correctional Association, New York State Minorities in Criminal Justice, New York Corrections and Youth Services Association, SUNY Cortland Alumni Association Board, and serve as the Chair of the Northeast Region for the Correctional Leaders Association.

When I took over as Acting Commissioner, I outlined my vision to staff and informed them that I will be steadfast in my commitment to their safety and wellbeing. This includes promoting sound security practices while expanding progressive programs to change behavior and prepare individuals to return home. I also told them that we need

to face the challenges to recruit and retain the next generation of professionals to provide them relief and advance our mission into the future. Working with our unions, I will advocate for policies to enhance recruitment and increase safety in our institutions and the community.

Similarly, I shared my vision with the incarcerated population, reaffirming my commitment to embracing all forms of education and pushing boundaries to ensure that they have the skills needed for the job market of tomorrow. I told the population that I believe in them and who they can become. That their lived experiences are resources that can help their peers find the path to success and reduce violence, as I believe in redemption, transformation, and that people should not be forever defined by their worst mistake. This is evidenced by the record-low recidivism rates achieved last year. Among 2020 releases from custody, 19 percent returned to custody within three years, or said another way, 81 percent were successful in their transition to the community.

Since assuming the role of Acting Commissioner, we have implemented several new initiatives to advance the Department. These include terminating the collection of Work Release fees, creating a Service Provider Advisory Committee of non-profit organizations, establishing a pilot program to enroll incarcerated individuals in SNAP, increasing gate money five-fold, and installing WiFi in every facility to enable the use of the phone on tablets in order to increase communication with families.

While I am proud of our achievements to date, we have a lot of work ahead of us. I know that we have the personnel to continue to positively impact the lives of individuals entrusted to our care, and we will do so with professionalism, respect, and compassion. I understand the challenges our employees face each day, and I could not be prouder of their sacrifice and service to our state. I also understand the transformational progress being made each day by the incarcerated population and those supervised in the community. I will use my position to share these successes with the public and advocate for the safety and best interests of our staff and the populations we serve.

I again want to thank Governor Hochul for the opportunity to serve as the next Commissioner of DOCCS, for her unwavering support of the Department, and for her laser focus on enhancing public safety. I am grateful for your time in considering me for confirmation and will be happy to answer any questions.