



**For Immediate Release  
March 18, 2026**

**DOCCS ANNOUNCES SEIZURE OF DRONE DELIVERING CONTRABAND TO MARCY  
CORRECTIONAL FACILITY, HIGHLIGHTS NEED TO RESTRICT DRONE ACTIVITY NEAR  
PRISONS**

***Incident on Saturday, March 14 Highlights Need for Changes to State Law to Combat Growing  
Threat of Aerial Delivery of Contraband to Department of Corrections and Community  
Supervision Facilities***

***Agency Leaders, Union Partners Urge Legislature to Support Critical Public Safety Proposal in  
Governor Kathy Hochul's FY27 Executive Budget***

***New York State Police, DOCCS Officials Continue to Investigate Incident***

***Photos of the Seized Contraband Can be Found [Here](#)***

The New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) strongly supports Governor Kathy Hochul's FY27 Executive Budget proposal that addresses the growing threat of drones being used to deliver dangerous contraband into the State's correctional facilities.

At approximately 1 a.m. Saturday, March 14, staff at Marcy Correctional Facility detected a drone flying above the facility grounds that subsequently released a package between dormitory buildings inside the facility's secure fence. Staff quickly recovered the package and notified the New York State Police and DOCCS Office of Special Investigations.

Due to wires protruding from the package, the New York State Police Bomb Squad responded to ensure the package did not pose an immediate threat. Once deemed safe, the package was opened and found to contain the following contraband:

- Two eight-inch, double-edged knives
- Approximately 530 grams of a green leafy substance
- Five full pieces of paper saturated in intoxicating chemicals
- One cell phone
- Two hair clippers with chargers and accessories
- Four bandanas

The drone used in the incident was also recovered outside the facility. The investigation into the incident remains ongoing. If those responsible are identified, they will face criminal prosecution.

**DOCCS Commissioner Daniel F. Martuscello III said,** “Contraband introduced into correctional facilities fuels violence and puts both staff and the incarcerated population at risk. The use of drones to deliver weapons, drugs, and cell phones is an evolving but imminent threat that our correctional system is facing as we continue to close off other means of introducing contraband into our facilities. I want to thank our staff at Marcy for their quick and decisive action this weekend to ensure the safety and security of our facility. DOCCS is working closely with our union partners to support Governor Hochul’s legislation, which would provide important tools to prevent unlawful drone activity and better protect those who live and work inside our facilities every day. I strongly encourage the Legislature to approve this critical public safety proposal.”

**NYSOPBA President Chris Summers said,** "The use of drones for illegal activities, such as smuggling contraband into correctional facilities, has become a growing threat to the safety of everyone inside our prisons. As staff members have heightened their vigilance in stopping contraband from entering through inmate visits and packages, drones are increasingly being used to deliver dangerous drugs, weapons, and other illicit items to inmates. This trend poses a serious risk to the safety of both staff and inmates. We fully support the Governor’s proposal to criminalize the use of drones within 500 feet of correctional facilities, and we urge the State Legislature to stand behind this critical initiative. I also want to commend the staff at Marcy Correctional Facility for their excellent work in detecting the drone and preventing dangerous contraband, including drugs, weapons, and a cell phone, from reaching the inmates.”

**Council 82 Local President Russell Fox said,** “The introduction of dangerous contraband fuels violence within prison walls, undermining safety for both staff and incarcerated. With drones emerging as a new tactic for smuggling these items, it is critical that proactive measures are taken to mitigate this growing threat. Council 82 Local 2951 supports Governor Hochul’s legislation to mitigate this threat.”

**CSEA President Mary Sullivan said,** “CSEA strongly supports Governor Hochul’s legislation to help aide and mitigate the growing safety threats that drones pose to the staff and incarcerated individuals within the DOCCS system. This legislation would help to establish restricted areas of the use of drones, allow the agency to detect, address and abate their unlawful interference in daily operations and more effectively deter future attempts to utilize drones as vehicles for delivering dangerous contraband within the correctional facilities.”

**NYS Public Employees Federation President Wayne Spence said,** “Drone-delivered contraband is a dangerous and rapidly evolving threat inside our correctional facilities. When drugs, weapons, or toxic substances make their way behind the walls, it puts everyone at risk — including the civilian workforce that keeps these facilities operating every day. PEF members, such as teachers, counselors, and nurses, work in close contact with incarcerated individuals, and we have already seen a troubling rise in assaults and exposure to dangerous substances.

We thank law enforcement for acting quickly in this incident and preventing harm — this time. But it is a stark reminder that contraband is not just a security issue; it is a workplace safety issue. Civilian staff should never have to fear for their safety simply for doing their jobs.

PEF supports Governor Hochul’s proposal to crack down on illegal drone activity and give law enforcement the tools they need to stop these deliveries before they occur. Protecting the safety of everyone who works inside our correctional facilities — uniformed and civilian alike — must remain a top priority.”

The Governor’s proposal would strengthen the State’s ability to address illegal drone activity by:

- Prohibiting the use of drones in a nefarious manner and restricting drone activity over sensitive locations, including correctional facilities.
- Establishing new criminal offenses for unlawful drone activity.
- Expanding the authority of trained law enforcement agencies to detect, intercept, and disable drones that pose a public safety threat, with any mitigation actions reported to the New York State Police.
- Directing the State Police to establish a registry known as the New York State Blue List, identifying approved drones and drone mitigation technology that may be purchased by the State.

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