



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

## Statement by Senator George Borrello on Surge in Prison Staff Sickened by Substance Exposures

GEORGE M. BORRELLO January 29, 2025

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JAMESTOWN, NY – In light of a troubling surge in incidents where prison staff have fallen seriously ill after exposure to inmates suspected of drug overdoses—most recently at Lakeview Correctional Facility—Senator George Borrello issued the following statement:

“For too long, DOCCS and the Hochul administration have ignored the escalating crisis of contraband and dangerous drugs infiltrating our state’s correctional facilities. The recent

surge in inmate overdoses - followed by staff falling ill and even requiring Narcan to be revived - leaves no doubt that our corrections officers and medical personnel are being placed in harm's way daily, with little to no protection from the state.

These brave men and women are tasked with maintaining order and ensuring safety within our prisons, yet they are the ones being sent to the hospital after unknowingly coming into contact with lethal substances. The fact that hazmat teams and law enforcement officials cannot even determine what these substances are should be setting off alarm bells at the highest levels. Instead, the administration continues to drag its feet while officers suffer.

It is time for real action. The availability and use of body scanners to screen all visitors entering our prisons should be standard operating procedure. However, it is not, despite the technology being authorized in the 2023 state budget. Contact visits should be suspended by executive order until improved drug detection methods and enhanced safety protocols are in place.”

If Governor Hochul is truly committed to protecting public servants, she must act now to ensure that staff working in our correctional facilities are not forced to risk their lives just by doing their jobs. These dedicated men and women deserve better, and I will continue to fight for the protections they need.”