



## ***Officers Injured at Bare Hill Correctional Facility***

### ***Visitor Arrested Attempting to Bring K2 into Watertown Correctional Facility***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***November 12, 2020***

**Albany, NY** – Drugs were at the center of two incidents at two North Country correctional facilities in which officers were injured by an inmate high on drugs and a visitor was arrested attempting to bring drugs into an inmate.

The first incident occurred on Tuesday, November 3. An officer observed an inmate in the recreation area of the dorm at Bare Hill in a state of intoxication. The inmate was being disruptive. The female officer attempted to clear other inmates from the recreation area when the inmate charged her. Two inmates came to her aid and grabbed the inmate before he could get to the officer. Two officers responded to the dorm. The inmate broke free from the two inmates and charged at the officers when they entered the dorm. Two applications of OC spray was administered but had no effect. The officers grabbed the inmate in a body hold and took him to the ground. On the ground, the inmate kicked one of the officers in the groin and another in the wrist. The inmate continued to struggle until additional staff arrived and he was placed in handcuffs and removed from the dorm.

The inmate, 26, was placed in a Special Housing Unit pending disciplinary charges. He is serving a five year sentence after being convicted in Albany County for Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance.

Staff believe the inmate was high on synthetic marijuana, commonly known as the dangerous drug K2.

Two officers were transported to an outside hospital for shoulder, knee and groin pain. They were treated and released.

On Saturday, November 7, at approximately 9:40 a.m., a K9 alerted to a visitor at Watertown Correctional Facility. The woman, who is from Utica, was interviewed by investigators and voluntarily turned over balloons that she had hidden in her pants. The balloons contained 7.8 grams of synthetic marijuana.

The visitor was transported to the New York State Police Barracks in Watertown and charged with Promoting Prison Contraband 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Bryan Hluska, NYSCOPBA Central Region Vice President and John Roberts NYSCOPBA Northern Region Vice President, called for the reinstatement of the Secure Vendor Program in a joint statement.

“Two separate drug incidents at North Country prisons magnify the continued drug problem in our facilities. One, at Watertown, in which alert staff caught a woman trying to bring drugs into an inmate. The second, in which the dangerous drug K2 had already made its way into the hands of an inmate and it resulted in two staff being injured. Once again, this is a call for the Secure Vendor Program. With the Secure Vendor Program, drugs like this wouldn’t stand a chance of getting inside of our prisons. DOCCS owes it to the safety of staff to reinstate it.”