



## **Blakeman: Hochul Defends a Narco-Regime While Its Criminal Networks Flood New York With Deadly Drugs**

Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, Republican candidate for Governor of New York, today sharply criticized Governor Kathy Hochul for denouncing today's mission as a "flagrant abuse of power," calling her remarks "a stunning defense of a narco-regime whose criminal enterprise has devastated New York families."

"Let's be absolutely clear," Blakeman said. "Today's mission was aimed at toppling Nicolás Maduro, a man U.S. authorities have accused of running a drug-trafficking regime that has flooded American cities — including New York — with lethal narcotics. Those drugs are killing our children and tearing families apart, and Kathy Hochul is more outraged by action against Maduro than by the carnage on our streets."

Blakeman pointed to a growing body of federal indictments and law-enforcement actions tying Venezuelan criminal networks to drug trafficking, gang violence, and organized crime activity in New York:

- **Tren de Aragua Racketeering and Drug Indictments (Southern District of New York):**  
Federal prosecutors charged dozens of members and associates of the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua with racketeering offenses, including narcotics distribution, robbery, weapons offenses, and conspiracy, including the sale of the synthetic drug commonly known as "tusi," which has been linked to addiction and violence in New York communities.
- **Venezuelan Gun and Drug Trafficking Rings Operating in NYC:**  
Law enforcement dismantled Venezuelan-linked crews involved in illegal firearms trafficking and drug distribution, with activity centered in Manhattan and the Bronx, underscoring the transnational nature of these criminal enterprises.
- **Street-Level Drug and Gang Operations Tied to Venezuelan Networks:**  
NYPD and federal officials have warned about Venezuelan gang recruitment into moped robbery rings, violent street crime, and drug distribution, particularly involving migrants exploited by organized criminal groups.
- **High-Level Venezuelan Drug Traffickers Prosecuted With New York Ties:**  
Federal prosecutors convicted Venezuelan national Carlos Orense Azocar for conspiring to import massive quantities of cocaine into the United States, protected by military-grade weapons — a stark example of the drug pipelines feeding U.S. markets, including New York.

- Former Venezuelan General Pleads Guilty to Narco-Terrorism:

A former Venezuelan general admitted to participating in large-scale cocaine trafficking conspiracies tied to terrorist organizations, reinforcing U.S. government findings that elements of the Maduro regime function as a narco-state.

Blakeman also cited repeated cases in New York where foreign nationals, including Venezuelans arrested on drug, gang, and violent charges, were released pending trial under cashless bail, often over the objections of prosecutors — a policy framework he says emboldens criminal networks. “These are not isolated incidents — they are a pattern,” Blakeman said. “Venezuelan drug rings push poison north, and New York’s broken bail system makes it easier for criminals to stay on our streets. That deadly combination exists because of failed leadership.”

“Kathy Hochul wants to lecture America about ‘abuse of power,’” Blakeman added. “The real abuse is forcing parents to bury their kids because fentanyl and other drugs poured into our state while politicians look the other way.”

Blakeman contrasted Hochul’s record with his own leadership in Nassau County.

“In Nassau County, we back law enforcement and put public safety first,” Blakeman said. “As Governor, I will fix bail reform, dismantle criminal gangs, confront international drug traffickers, and make it clear that New York will no longer be a dumping ground for the consequences of failed foreign and domestic policy.”

“Standing up to a drug trafficker masquerading as a president is not an abuse of power,” Blakeman concluded. “Abandoning New York families to addiction, violence, and death — that is.”

####