



PRESS RELEASE

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## **Governor Kathy Hochul Proposes Article 14 Constitutional Amendment for Closed Correctional Facilities**

### **Protect the Adirondacks Supports an Amendment to Repurpose Closed State Prisons in the Adirondacks**

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In her State of the State Book, Governor Kathy Hochul stated her intention to propose a Constitutional Amendment to authorize the redevelopment of three closed correctional facilities in the Adirondacks that are sitting dormant so that they can be returned to “productive and critically needed uses, such as for housing development, while also securing a win for conservation” by proposing the addition of new lands into the Forest Preserve (quoting State of the State Book, page 79).

Protect the Adirondacks has long supported a bundled Constitutional Amendment to Article 14, Section 1, the “Forever Wild” clause, for the three closed prison facilities in the Adirondacks to allow them to be repurposed. “Due to the Forever Wild provision that applies to these State-owned lands, a Constitutional Amendment is necessary to allow for the redevelopment of State correctional facilities that have been closed in recent years,” said Claudia Braymer, Executive Director, Protect the Adirondacks. “We support a Constitutional Amendment for these facilities because it will help Adirondack communities revitalize these sites for public benefit and improve management of the State-owned Forest Preserve. Protect the Adirondacks fully supports Governor Hochul’s plan to add replacement lands that will compensate the Forest Preserve and provide new wildlands and public recreational and outdoor experiences.”

Governor Hochul’s proposal will authorize redevelopment of Camp Gabriels in Franklin County, Mount McGregor Correctional Facility in Saratoga County, and the Moriah Shock Correctional Facility in Essex County. There are also three other closed facilities in Forest Preserve counties: Great Meadow facility in Washington County, Sullivan facility in Sullivan County (in the Catskills) and Bare Hill facility in Franklin County (closing in March 2026). These facilities include hundreds of buildings and are highly developed.

“The Forest Preserve and the lives of the people in the communities where these facilities are sited will be improved by ensuring that the buildings and infrastructure do not become permanent blights on their surroundings,” said Claudia Braymer, Executive Director, Protect the Adirondacks. “Protect the Adirondacks stands ready to help Governor Hochul and her Administration to craft and pass a new amendment. If ‘first passage’ is achieved in 2026, then we could see ‘second passage’ and a statewide vote in 2027.”

Protect the Adirondacks supports Governor Hochul’s proposal to advance through the amendment process the three facilities in the Adirondacks that have been closed for some time (Camp Gabriels, Moriah Shock, and Mount McGregor). As compared to the three more recently closed facilities (Great Meadow, Sullivan, and Bare Hill), significant groundwork and dialogue have already taken place that position the proposed three facilities to move more quickly than the three new ones.

The three facilities in Governor Hochul’s proposal are sprawling and contain a considerable amount of acreage and an assortment of buildings. Camp Gabriels includes roughly 92 acres and 48 buildings. Moriah Shock covers 60 acres and has around 20 buildings. Mount McGregor covers 53 acres and has around 100 buildings and structures. The buildings at Moriah Shock are still in relatively good shape. Some of the dozens of buildings at Mount McGregor are massive structures made of stone and concrete. Some of the buildings at Camp Gabriels are historic structures and some still hold potential for reuse. Demolishing the buildings would be expensive and create a tremendous amount of waste and wasted opportunity. [Background information is available on the Protect the Adirondacks website.](#)

These fully developed sites have potential to be successfully repurposed. Mount McGregor is located in Saratoga County, one of the fastest growing counties in the state, and Moriah Shock functioned more like an educational campus that can be readapted. The location of Camp Gabriels in the Tri-Lakes area of the Adirondacks, arguably the most dynamic neighborhood in the Adirondack Park, also holds promise. These buildings could be put towards a number of different public uses from housing to small business space to non-profit space.

On Election Day, November 2025, the most recent Article 14 Constitutional Amendment was passed by New Yorkers to clean up constitutional violations at the Mount Van Hoevenberg Winter Olympics Sports Complex outside of Lake Placid managed by the Olympic Regional Development Authority.

### **Protect the Adirondacks**

Protect the Adirondacks is an IRS-approved non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and stewardship of the 6-million-acre Adirondack Park. Our mission is to protect the Adirondack Park’s wild character for current and future generations. PROTECT pursues this mission through a combination of advocacy, grassroots organizing, independent public oversight,

research, water quality monitoring, education, and legal action. Protect the Adirondacks was formed in 2009 as the result of a merger between two long-standing environmental conservation groups in the Adirondack Park, the Resident's Committee to Protect the Adirondacks (est. 1991) and the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks (est. 1901). Protect the Adirondacks is managed by a 21-member Board of Directors of Adirondack leaders with expertise in environmental law, local government, Adirondack environmental and cultural history, state agency management, and small business. Protect the Adirondacks maintains an office in a 100% energy efficient, solar-and wind-powered office in Johnsburg in the central Adirondacks. For more information see [www.protectadks.org](http://www.protectadks.org).

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