

FREE + FAIR SUES TO DISBAND NASSAU COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S ILLEGAL MILITIA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW YORK – FREE + FAIR LITIGATION GROUP today with co-counsel announced a major lawsuit to dissolve a secretive, taxpayer-funded militia of armed civilians established by County Executive Bruce Blakeman in Nassau County, New York.

"County Executive Blakeman's militia endangers public safety in Nassau County and the health of our democracy nationwide," said Carey Dunne of Free + Fair Litigation Group. "Our lawsuit alleges an authoritarian power grab in the heart of suburban America, where a handpicked group of armed vigilantes operates secretly at the beck and call of an unchecked executive. We cannot let the abuse of executive power go unanswered — at any level of government. Free + Fair is proud to work with legislators and our co-counsel to protect the rule of law."

[The lawsuit](#), filed in New York State Supreme Court, alleges that County Executive Blakeman's program is illegal under New York law and a waste of public resources. The lawsuit asks the court to disband the militia and stop all public spending on it; to declare it illegal; and to compel the County Executive's administration to reveal who is being recruited, the scope of their training, the specific weapons they will carry, and the total taxpayer cost of the program.

[The plaintiffs](#) in the case are Nassau County Legislators Debra Mulé and Scott Davis. Both are members of the Nassau County Legislature Public Safety Committee. The plaintiffs are represented by Free + Fair and Kelner & Kelner. The case is *Mulé v. Nassau County*.

County Executive Blakeman's Militia

In March 2024, Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman and Sherriff Anthony LaRocco posted [an announcement](#) calling for private citizens to apply to join a team of "Provisional

Emergency Special Deputy Sheriffs for the protection of human life and property during an emergency.” In the event that Blakeman declared an emergency, these civilians would “be activated,” and would carry guns and perform other police functions on behalf of the County.

The militia’s announcement was [met with opposition](#) in Nassau County. In April 2024, several hundred residents attended a protest to express concerns about the program. [One community member noted](#) that the militia will “pit neighbor against neighbor” and [another asserted](#) that “there is no need to give residents the broad and dangerously vague authority to respond, armed with deadly weapons, in the event of an emergency.”

The lawsuit alleges that in addition to paying militia members a daily \$150 stipend once they are “activated,” Blakeman and LaRocco are using unauthorized taxpayer funds to conduct background checks during the hiring process, for random drug screenings of participants, and for training. In September 2024, in response to media inquiries, Blakeman and LaRocco revealed that they had already enlisted 25 civilians into the militia and planned for a total of 75.

Existing Public Safety Resources in Nassau County

The Nassau County Police Department has more than 2,500 sworn police officers. In an emergency, Blakeman and LaRocco are authorized to call upon hundreds of unarmed civilian volunteers in the Nassau County Auxiliary Police and the Nassau County Office of Emergency Management Community Emergency Response Team. New York State law additionally allows them to request assistance from nearly 60,000 trained, registered, sworn, and armed officers from across New York State.

As set forth in the lawsuit, the County Executive “ha[s] not explained how a group of less than 100 armed civilians would materially aid the thousands of trained, registered, sworn, and armed police and peace officers available to meet the needs of Nassau County residents in the event of an emergency.” The lawsuit alleges that “[a]uthorizing minimally trained private citizens to wield force on behalf of the government – and during an emergency no less – poses clear and obvious safety risks, both to trained law enforcement and the public at large.”