

December 8, 2024
The Honorable Philip D. Murphy
Governor of New Jersey
Office of the Governor
State House
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Subject: Urgent Concerns Regarding Nighttime Drone Flights Over Morris County

Dear Governor Murphy,

We, the undersigned Mayors of Morris County, write to you with deep concern regarding the ongoing nighttime drone flights that have been observed across our communities, from the Township of Pequannock to the Township of Washington and all areas in between. These flights, occurring under the cover of darkness, have raised significant alarm among the more than 500,000 County residents and local officials alike.

While the benefits of drone technology are widely recognized when used responsibly and transparently, the lack of information and clarity regarding these operations has caused fear and frustration among our constituents. Despite inquiries made to relevant authorities, we have yet to receive satisfactory answers about the purpose, operators, or safety protocols governing these flights.

Our concerns are multifaceted and urgent:

- 1. Public Safety:** The nighttime drone flights pose a potential threat to both air traffic and residents on the ground. Recently in nearby Somerset County, a medivac helicopter was denied landing at an accident site due to drone activity. In the absence of clarity regarding the operators' qualifications and adherence to FAA regulations, the risk of accidents cannot be ignored.
- 2. Privacy and Security:** Residents have expressed legitimate concerns about their privacy and the possibility of surveillance without consent. These fears erode trust in local and state governance when no credible explanations are provided.
- 3. Community Well-Being:** The persistent drone activity has caused unnecessary stress, particularly among families with young children and seniors. The noise and unpredictable flight patterns disrupt the peace and quiet that our communities value.
- 4. Air Space Restrictions:** Private businesses that rely on drones to survey properties have not been able to conduct that business.

As Mayors, it is our duty to ensure the safety and well-being of our residents. However, our efforts to address these concerns have been hindered by the lack of information available to us. This situation is untenable, and we respectfully urge your office to take immediate action to provide transparency and address these issues.

We request the following actions:

- 1. A full investigation into the nighttime drone flights to determine their origin, purpose, and compliance with all applicable regulations.**
- 2. Clear communication to local officials, law enforcement, and residents regarding the findings of this investigation.**
- 3. Implementation of measures to prevent unauthorized or unsafe drone operations within Morris County in the future.**

Governor Murphy, the safety and peace of mind of our residents are at stake. We trust that your office will treat this matter with the urgency and seriousness it warrants. We are committed to working collaboratively with your administration to resolve this issue and restore confidence in the safety and security of our communities.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter. We look forward to your prompt response.

Respectfully,

Ryan Herd Mayor Pequannock Township	Matthew Murello Mayor Washington Township	Thomas Ace Gallagher Mayor Hanover Township	Joe Jackson Mayor Rockaway Township
Christine Serrano Glassner Mayor Borough of Mendham	Guy Piserchia Mayor Long Hill Township	Matthew S. Kayne, DMD Mayor Montville Township	Thomas Mulligan Mayor Rockaway Borough
Joe Nicastro Mayor Mount Olive Township	James Barberio Mayor Parsippany- Troy Hills Township	Bill Chegwidden Mayor Wharton Borough	Sarah Neibart Mayor Mendham Township
Michael Stanzilis Mayor Mount Arlington Borough	Paul Carelli Mayor Borough of Riverdale	Janet Hoven Mayor Chester Borough	Jacqueline Albrecht Mayor Roxbury Township
Tim Drag Mayor Chester Township	Sam Morris Mayor Mine Hill Township	Joseph Pannullo Mayor East Hanover Township	Ron Franciulli Former Mayor Hanover Township
Eric Wilsusen Mayor Jefferson Township			

CC:

- The Honorable Mikie Sherrill, U.S. Representative, 11th Congressional District
- The Honorable Cory Booker Senior Senator, 11th Congressional District
- The Honorable Thomas H. Kean Jr., U.S. Congressman 7th District
- The Honorable Jon Bramnick, State Senator, District 21
- The Honorable Michele Matsikoudis, State Senator, District 21
- The Honorable Nancy Munoz, State Senator, District 21
- The Honorable Parker Space, State Senator, District 24
- The Honorable Dawn Fantasia, State Assembly Member, District 24
- The Honorable Mike Inganamort, State Assembly Member, District 24
- The Honorable Aura Dunn, State Assembly Member, District 25
- The Honorable Anthony Bucco, State Assembly Member, District 25
- The Honorable Christian Barranco, State Assembly Member, District 25
- The Honorable Joe Pennacchio, State Senator, District 26
- The Honorable Jay Webber, State Assembly Member, District 26
- The Honorable Brian Bergan, State Senator, District 26
- Morris County Board of Commissioners