



OFFICE OF THE ULSTER COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
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**ULSTER COUNTY DA'S OFFICE WINS APPEAL TO OVERTURN
SUPPRESSION OF ILLEGAL HANDGUN EVIDENCE**

Kingston, NY—On February 20, 2025, the New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Third Department, reversed an order issued by Ulster County Court Judge Bryan E. Rounds suppressing the recovery of a loaded 9 Millimeter handgun recovered by New York State Police during inventory search of a vehicle in August 2022.

In the early morning hours of September 23, 2022, New York State Police Trooper patrolling Interstate 87 in the Town of Ulster pulled over a 2011 Kia Soul for excessive speed. The driver, defendant Brandon Craddock, and his two passengers, did not have valid driver's licenses among them, so none of them could be permitted to drive the vehicle; as a result, the vehicle needed to be towed.

Following standard State Police policy, the Trooper was required to search and document the contents of the vehicle before towing it; he informed the driver he would be doing so. During the inventory search which was fully video recorded on the Trooper's body camera, he recovered an illegal loaded handgun, among other personal items in the vehicle.

Defendant was subsequently indicted by an Ulster County Grand Jury in October of 2022 on charges of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree. He sought to have the evidence of the gun thrown out, claiming that the inventory search was not legal or properly documented.

Following a pretrial suppression hearing, the Ulster County Court granted defendant's motion to suppress the gun, so the prosecution would not be permitted to use the gun as evidence in the trial of the case because the court concluded that the inventory search was invalid.



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The DA's Office appealed the decision; **ADA Joan Gudesblatt Lamb, Chief of Appeals**, argued the case in the higher court in Albany on October 18, 2024.

In a [decision](#) issued on Thursday, February 20, 2025, the higher court, Appellate Division, Third Department, reversed the ruling of Ulster County Court, so the illegally possessed loaded firearm can now be used as evidence in trial.

Chief of Appeals Joan Gudesblatt Lamb handled the appeal and oral argument in this matter. Defendant was represented on appeal by **Assistant Public Defender Carly Burkhardt** of the Ulster County Public Defender's Office.

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