



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

## Senator Martins Announces Senate Passage of Measures to Prevent Drug Use in New York Communities

JACK M. MARTINS March 13, 2015

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### *Bills Would Prevent Use of Parks or Playgrounds for Drug Activity and Strengthen Penalties for Meth-Related Crimes*

Senator Jack M. Martins (R-7th Senate District) announced that the New York State Senate has passed legislation to stop drug dealers from preying on children at playgrounds and parks, as well as combat the spread of methamphetamine (“meth”) use in New York. Senator Martins supported both measures in the Senate.

“Criminals who deal drugs at playgrounds and parks are targeting children and selling them poison. These are places where children are supposed to be able to play and enjoy themselves safely. Enhancing penalties for dealing drugs at playgrounds and parks, just as we currently do at schools and day care centers, would give law enforcement another tool to get drug dealers off the streets and protect our children,” said Senator Martins.

The first bill (S994) would increase penalties for people who sell drugs in playgrounds and parks, protecting children and their families from the dangers of drug dealers. This measure expands upon current New York State law, which penalizes people who sell drugs on school grounds or day-care centers, to include parks and playgrounds that may not be attached to schools. The bill would help law enforcement prosecute drug dealers who use parks and playgrounds in an effort to target children.

The second bill (S1150) would strengthen penalties for the sale and possession of meth and make them consistent with penalties for crimes involving heroin and cocaine. Domestic meth availability is at a five year high, the result of increasing large scale production of the

drug in Mexico and increases in the small scale production in the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Justice National Drug Intelligence Center. Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Ohio have enacted similar laws to combat the spread of meth.

“Meth is becoming more and more prevalent, and it can be just as harmful as heroin and cocaine. Our laws should reflect this fact, and that’s what this legislation would ensure,” Senator Martins added.

The bills will be sent to the Assembly.