



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
Susan Serino

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SUSAN SERINO October 19, 2015

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EAST FISHKILL, NY—Because over half of young people who inject heroin report the abuse of prescription pain killers before starting to use the deadly drug, Senator Sue Serino (R, C, I—Hyde Park) partnered with the East Fishkill Police Department to proactively combat the heroin epidemic by getting unused prescription drugs off of our streets.

On Saturday, October 17th, Senator Serino hosted a free 'Shed the Meds!' event at the East Fishkill Town Hall. The event allowed members of the community to conveniently drop off their unused or expired prescription medications in a drop box provided by the East Fishkill Police Department, who safely disposed of them after the event.

"I was stunned by the event's turnout," **said Senator Serino**. "Too many people said that they had been saving these prescriptions for years not knowing how to safely dispose of them and some even reported locking them away in safes or hiding them to keep them out of the wrong hands. The event was a major success not only because it helped take pounds and pounds of unused drugs off our streets, but also because as it helped call attention to the fact that these drop boxes are always available to the community at local police stations. I thank everyone involved for making it a success, especially the East Fishkill Police Department and Drug Crisis in our Backyard, who held an important narcan training during the same time."

"We know that prescription drug abuse is the gateway to heroin use. Getting these prescription drugs off of our streets is the first line of defense when it comes to keeping them out of our kids' hands," **said East Fishkill Police Lieutenant Matthew G. Orsino**. "Our police department has disposed of over 500 pounds of prescription drugs since the drop box was put in place in 2013. That's huge when you consider that if they aren't properly disposed of they can easily be picked up and misused. Members of the community can bring their unused prescriptions to our department's drop box 24/7 where they can dispose of them safely, and anonymously. We thank Senator Serino for calling attention to this critical issue and for helping to raise awareness about the options available in our community."

Drug Crisis in Our Backyard—a local nonprofit organization dedicated to helping families overcome drug addiction—hosted a free Naloxone Overdose Prevention Training at the East Fishkill Town Hall as well. With Naloxone, an overdose can be reversed by blocking heroin or other opioids in the nervous system for 30 to 90 minutes—giving first responders and medical personnel the time they need to potentially save a life.

In speaking about the event's importance, Steven Salomone, Co-Founder of Drug Crisis In Our Backyard, said "Teaming up with Senator Sue Serino to combine her Shed the Meds event with Drug Crisis in Our Backyard's Narcan training was truly powerful. It is evidence that by joining resources and aligning them we can make headway against the heroin and opioid epidemic facing our community. We commend Senator Serino for her support and assistance to our group and to the community in dealing head on with the problem."

After seeing how effective the event was and recognizing the need for others, Senator Serino looks forward to hosting more throughout the district. Details to follow.

Senator Serino is pictured above with Steven Salomone and East Fishkill Police Officer Gregory Stanis.