



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
Kenneth P. LaValle

Senator Ken LaValle: Approval of Measures to Increase Enforcement Against Drug Trafficking and Dealers Who Target Children

KENNETH P. LAVALLE March 2, 2017

| ISSUE: **DRUGS, COMBATING HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION**



March 2, 2017 – Senator Ken LaValle announced that State Senate approved two drug prevention bills that he co-sponsored to help fight the spread of heroin and opioid use in New York. The measures strengthen enforcement against major drug traffickers and those who sell drugs in parks and playgrounds.

Senator LaValle said, “Fighting the war against heroin remains my priority. We need to provide the necessary tools for the enforcement community to keep the dealers away from our children, off the street and out of our communities. Under current law, major drug

traffickers are able to avoid prosecution for their role in infecting our communities with the menace of heroin. The measures will help to protect the safety of children and their families by providing enhanced penalties for the sale of controlled substances on parks and playgrounds.”

The first measure (S301) strengthens existing laws to increase successful prosecutions of major drug traffickers in New York. The measure would accurately reflect the nature of criminal enterprises by: changing the number of persons needing to be involved and charged as part of a drug organization from four to three; lowering the minimum required proceeds from the sale of controlled substances during a 12-month period from \$75,000 to \$25,000 to reflect the low street prices of heroin; and increasing law enforcement’s ability to charge lower-level participants in drug trafficking.

The Senate also approved legislation that aims to protect children in parks and playgrounds from drug dealers. The legislation (S814A), expands upon current New York State law, which includes increased penalties for people who sell drugs on school grounds or daycare centers, to include parks and playgrounds that may not be attached to schools. The measure would help law enforcement prosecute drug dealers who use parks and playgrounds in an effort to target children.

Senator LaValle noted that both measures were among the recommendations from a report released last year by the Senate’s Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction. Senator LaValle is a member of the Task force. The report detailed measures to provide greater resources to law enforcement to aid in combating this crisis, as well as improve prevention efforts, increase access to treatment, and expand recovery options.

Both pieces of legislation have been transferred to the NY State Assembly for consideration.