



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian X. Foley

Senator Foley Celebrates Judiciary Committee Reporting Out Denise's Law

BRIAN X. FOLEY June 3, 2010

| ISSUE: **HEALTH, CHILDREN, YOUTH**

Senator Brian X. Foley (D – Blue Point) celebrated Denise’s Law being reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee in Albany yesterday.

Denise’s Law will allow parents who wish to place their children in a detoxification program to seek a court order to keep the child in the program. Currently, if a child is checked into a program by a parent or guardian the child is under no obligation to remain in the program and may check him or herself out at any time, even if the child has not yet reached the age of majority. The legislation (S7833-A) will also require health insurance companies to cover the cost of detoxification programs.

“Parents across our state, and right here on Long Island, are struggling everyday with their children’s substance abuse problems,” said Senator Foley. “Denise’s Law will help to ease their struggle by assisting them in their fight to keep their children in the detoxification programs that are so crucial to beginning the process of breaking the addiction. It will also ensure that parents will not have to make the decision not to get help for their child because they cannot afford to cover the cost of detoxification out of their own pocket. Being reported out of the Judiciary Committee is a major step forward for Denise’s Law. Now, this critical

legislation will be able to be brought before the full senate for consideration.”

“When parents are fighting for the life of their teen, especially against an enemy like heroin, they are in a race against time,” said Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice. “We must give them the added tools to wage this war by getting their child treatment. No parent should be left with a feeling of helplessness because they were unable to keep their child in a detox program or because their insurance company refused or limited coverage. Denise’s law will allow parents to fight for their child’s life and to get them the dependency treatment necessary before it’s too late.”

Denise’s Law is named after Denise Gerardi, a former Sachem High School student who passed away in 2008 following an accidental overdose. The legislation was introduced by Senator Foley after he was approached by the AWARE Committee, a group of students, parents, educators and community leaders in the Sachem School District and surrounding communities.