



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

## Senator Flanagan Calls For Passage Of Salvia Ban

JOHN J. FLANAGAN March 10, 2011

| ISSUE: **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

Following media reports that a teen in New York City had been smoking salvia divinorum before apparently leaping to his death in Roosevelt Island, Senator John Flanagan (2nd Senate District) today called for the Assembly to join with him in banning the sale of this legal hallucinogen throughout New York State. According to media reports, the 21-year-old man jumped from a Roosevelt Island balcony while smoking the legal herb just before he jumped.

Senator Flanagan has been pushing for a statewide ban of the hallucinogen, which is widely claimed to have the same effects of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), for years and has been successful in gaining passage of the ban in the Senate a number of times. This is the same legal substance that pop star Miley Cyrus was allegedly smoking in a widely distributed video clip in December of last year.

The bill is currently sponsored in the Assembly by Assemblyman Peter Rivera.

“The Senate has passed this bill throughout the years and I am hopeful that by working with Assemblyman Rivera and Assemblyman Carl Heastie, who have been working with my office on this issue, we can finally get it passed for the good of all of our communities. It is time to protect our younger residents from this dangerous and legal substance and make this ban a



reality in New York State before any other family is affected,” stated Senator Flanagan.

Salvia divinorum, also known as Diviner’s Sage, Sister Salvia, Ska Maria Pastora or simply salvia, is a psychoactive plant from the mint family and is currently available on the Internet and in stores without age restrictions.

According to the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), salvia divinorum is chewed or smoked to induce illusions and hallucinations, the diversity of which is described by users as similar to those induced by ketamine, mescaline, or psilocybin. It is currently under review by the medical and scientific community to determine if it should be a controlled substance. While those long-term effects are still being considered, the National Drug Intelligence Center has indicated that they may be similar to those produced by other hallucinogens such as LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide) including depression and schizophrenia.

Some abusers also indicate that long-term abuse can cause hallucinogen persisting perception disorder, or "flashbacks." Numerous individuals report experiencing negative effects during their first experience with Salvia divinorum and indicate that they would not use it a second time. Some others report that the drug caused them to become introverted and sometimes unable to communicate clearly.

Senator Flanagan’s legislation, which would go into effect sixty days after becoming law, would subject violators to a civil penalty of up to \$500 per violation.

“The federal government has left it up to the states to regulate salvia divinorum and it is time that this ban was enacted to protect our residents. This tragic incident shows that these substances pose a danger. It is destructive, it is a gateway to further drug use and unfortunately it is legal,” stated Senator Flanagan. “This must be the year we finally get salvia divinorum off our store shelves.”



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