



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

## Senator Fuschillo Announces Passage of “I-Stop” Legislation to Reduce Prescription Drug Abuse

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. June 11, 2012

| ISSUE: **PRESCRIBED DRUGS OR PRESCRIPTIONS**

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R – Merrick) today announced the passage of legislation by the State Senate and Assembly to combat the escalating problem of prescription drug abuse. The “I-Stop” legislation would make significant changes to the way prescription drugs are distributed and monitored in New York State.

The bill (S7637), cosponsored by Senator Fuschillo, includes “real time” prescription tracking to provide more information to doctors and pharmacists, in an effort to prevent deaths from abuse and overdoses of prescription drugs, particularly painkillers.

“Passage of this legislation will save countless lives by giving physicians and pharmacists the information they need to keep dangerous drugs out of the hands of those who abuse them,” Senator Fuschillo said. “This new law will allow us to reverse an epidemic that has destroyed hundreds of families and lives.”

The provisions of the legislation include:

- Creating a modernized and improved “real time” Prescription Monitoring Program (I-STOP) that practitioners and pharmacists can securely and easily access, allowing them to

view their patients' controlled substance histories;

- Requiring e-prescribing, making New York a national leader by being one of the first states to move from paper prescriptions to a system mandating electronic prescribing;
- Updating controlled substance schedules to align New York's Controlled Substances Act with Federal Law and changing the schedules for hydrocodone compounds and tramadol to reduce abuse;
- Establishing a Safe Disposal Program to increase the options available to safely dispose of unused controlled substances and prevent people who abuse prescription painkillers from obtaining them from friends or relatives.

The abuse of prescription medicine has become the nation's fastest-growing drug problem according to the Office of National Drug Control Policy. According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 15,000 people die every year of overdoses due to prescription painkillers. In 2010, 1 in 20 people in the United States over the age of 11 reported using prescription painkillers for nonmedical reasons in the past year.

The abuse of prescription drugs is a statewide problem. On New Years Eve of last year, off-duty Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives agent John Capano was fatally shot when he intervened in a robbery involving prescription drugs at Charlie's Pharmacy in Seaford, Nassau County. Nearly one year ago, on June 19, 2011, David Laffer shot four and killed four people at a drug store in Medford, Suffolk County, as he stole 11,000 prescription hydrocodone pills. Michael D. Israel, 20, of North Buffalo, killed himself on June 4, 2011 via a self-inflicted gunshot wound because of his addiction to prescription drugs. Most recently, last week, 100 people were arrested in a coordinated law enforcement sweep targeting illegal prescription drug use in New York City and Long Island.

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