



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## **IN THE NEWS - Staten Island**

### **Advance: State law putting tighter controls on powerfull painkiller takes effect this week**

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THE LANDMARK  
**I-STOP LAW**

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Saving Lives by Preventing  
Prescription Drug Abuse

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- No longer will patients receive automatic refills on the painkiller hydrocodone -- most well-known as Vicodin -- under a new law that takes effect in New York State this week.

Attorney General Eric Schneiderman wrote an open letter to doctors, pharmacists and other medical professionals as a reminder that hydrocodone was reclassified as a Schedule III controlled substance.

"As you know prescription drug abuse is a serious and growing problem in New York State and across the nation," he wrote. "Your cooperation in rescheduling of hydrocodone will reduce instances of illegal diversion and abuse, and ultimately save lives."

Reclassifying the drugs was mandated as part of Schneiderman's Internet System for Tracking Overprescribing, or I-Stop.

The new bill establishes a real-time database, and mandates that doctors - or someone they designate and train to use the system - access the registry before prescribing certain drugs.

Pharmacists would also have access to the registry, and would be required to report each time they dispense such drugs.

It also mandates that doctors submit prescriptions electronically to combat forged prescriptions.

The bill, which unanimously passed both houses last year, was sponsored by Assemblyman Michael Cusick (D-Mid-Island) and state Sen. Andrew Lanza (R-Staten Island.)

"Hydrocodone is a narcotic drug that is used as a painkiller to relieve mild to severe pain and suppress excessive coughing," Cusick said last week.

"This prescription drug has become significantly addictive. They can cause a lot of health hazards when used excessively."

The new restrictions apply to all products containing hydrocodone, including combinations with acetaminophen and ibuprofen.

By Stephanie Slepian/Staten Island Advance on February 28, 2013 at 7:47 AM,  
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