



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Senator Klein Applauds Arrest and Take Down of Bronx ‘Pill Mill’

JEFFREY D. KLEIN February 7, 2014

| ISSUE: **CRIME, HEALTH, PRESCRIBED DRUGS OR PRESCRIPTIONS**

BRONX, NY– Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) applauded the work of New York City and State law enforcement in arresting and indicting Dr. Robert Terdiman, Dr. Kevin Lowe and 21 individuals who took part in an illegal scheme to sell prescriptions for oxycodone at their clinic, Astramed Physicians, PC, in the Bronx. The two year investigation leading to yesterday’s arrest and indictment came from a tip provided by Senator Klein’s office, alerting them of potentially illegal activity at that site in 2010.

Senator Klein said: “For years, the physicians at Astramed have illegally sold narcotics prescriptions to individuals who could score up to \$30 per pill on the black market. But the impact of Astramed’s illegal activity went beyond just the illegal sale of prescriptions. Astramed – which moved three separate times in the Bronx before being caught – fundamentally disrupted the quality of life for residents and small business owners in the surrounding area. When I first learned of possible suspicious activity at Astramed, I reached out to partners at stage agencies immediately, and eventually teamed up with law enforcement to monitor activity.

“I commend Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan, the DEA, the NYPD and the U.S. Attorney’s office for putting an end to the despicable practices of Astramed’s physicians. We cannot – and will not – allow pill mills like Astramed open doors in our communities. I am

proud of the immediate action my office took to bring attention to Astramed's illegal activities and am thrilled that our community will finally be rid of this scourge to our way of life."

Four years ago, a constituent of Senator Klein's notified Klein's office of a possible methadone clinic instituted without notification to the community. Klein's office tried to call the clinic, but both the physicians and their office administrators did not return calls. After contacting numerous state agencies, including the NYS Dept. Of Health, NYS OASAS, NYS Office of Mental Health and NYS Office of People with Developmental Disabilities to learn more about the services Astramed provided, Klein's office contacted the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Working with investigators from the NYS Department of Health in the summer of 2010, Klein's office established through video surveillance that between 75 – 100 people were coming out of the office in any given day, along with a preponderance of cars with out-of-state plates surrounding the location.

In October 2010, Astramed moved to 2029 Westchester Avenue in Castle Hill. Klein's office continued to field complaints from the surrounding community while the investigation by law enforcement was ongoing. They subsequently moved to a location on Southern Boulevard.

Earlier today, the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York announced the indictment and arrest of Dr. Robert Terdiman, a licensed internist, who allegedly conducted illegal sales prescriptions for oxycodone. In a parallel investigation, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York charged 21 individuals in connection with the distribution scheme, including Astramed owner, Dr. Kevin Lowe.

In the announcement, the office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor estimated that 18,700 prescriptions for oxycodone were issued by Dr. Terdiman to over 4,200 individuals since June 2012. These pills, which tend to yield up to \$30 per pill on the black market, amounted to over \$90 million in illegal sales. ###