



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

Statement From Senator Andrew Lanza Regarding U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Decision to Approve Zohydro ER

ANDREW J LANZA February 28, 2014

| ISSUE: **PRESCRIBED DRUGS OR PRESCRIPTIONS**

As the debate over the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's approval of Zohydro ER, a powerful extended-release painkiller, continues to grow, Senator Andrew J. Lanza speaks out against the decision by asking Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman for his continued support in fighting the growing painkiller abuse epidemic that is facing New York.

Today, Senator Lanza is urging AG Schneiderman to join Attorneys General from at least 28 other states in asking the Food and Drug Administration to reconsider its approval of the powerful painkiller.

In August 2012, committed to combating the growing abuse of painkillers, and other highly-addictive opioids such as heroin, landmark legislation authored by Senator Lanza, called the Internet System For Tracking Over-Prescribing Act or I-Stop, was created in New York State. The law required the Department of Health to update and modernize the Prescription Monitoring program (PMP) Registry. Today, that Registry is one of the best systems in the nation to monitor prescription drug abuse and to help the medical community provide better care.

After signing into law a tool as important as I-Stop, which allows doctors and pharmacists to help Staten Islanders and other New Yorkers to avoid falling prey to prescription drug abuse, it would be an enormous set-back for a drug as powerful as Zohydro to hit the market

without – at the very least – having a tamper-resistant formulation that would make it impossible for someone to crush it into an ill-intended powder.

Our health professionals already need more funding for alcoholism and drug abuse treatment and counseling services. A drug of this caliber will only set back the progress that has been made to treat and deter drug use, and thereby increase the need for emergency treatment, rehabilitation programs and prevention services across the State.