



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph E. Robach

## Senator Robach & NYS Senate Majority Coalition to Host Forum on Heroin and Opioid Addiction

JOSEPH E. ROBACH April 2, 2014

### *Task Force Seeking Addiction Prevention & Treatment Experts to Testify at Forum*

New York State Senator Joseph Robach and the members of the Senate Majority Coalition announced today that they will be hosting a public forum on heroin and opioid addiction on Tuesday, April 15 from 10:00 a.m. – Noon. This hearing will be held at the Monroe County Office Building Legislative Chambers (4th floor, Rm. 406), 39 West Main Street, Rochester, NY 14614.

The hearing is part of a bipartisan task force that will hold forums across the state to solicit input from stakeholders and experts about addiction prevention and treatment options, the rise in heroin and opioid use, and the potential for drug-related crimes and other negative community impacts. The task force will then develop recommendations that will be used to draft legislation to address the issues raised.

The task force will also examine the crimes that accompany increases in illegal drug activity. In February, the New York Times reported that the federal Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) heroin seizures in New York State increased 67 percent over the last four years. The DEA's New York office "seized 144 kilograms of heroin, nearly 20 percent of its seizures nationwide, valued at roughly \$43 million."

“It’s very concerning to me, not only as a State Senator but as a father of three, to see the recent increase in heroin usage and addiction in our state. We need to do a better job of educating the public, particularly our youth, about the dangers of heroin and all other dangerous recreational opioids. It’s my hope that this task force will help us create measures to prevent future drug addiction,” said Robach.

In the Senate’s budget resolution passed last week, \$5 million was proposed for increased heroin prevention, treatment and recovery support services. The resolution also included a measure to increase the penalties for drug dealers by making it a class B felony for anyone to possess 50 or more individual packets of heroin and/or an amount of heroin with an aggregate value of at least \$300.

If interested in testifying at this forum, please contact Ashley Pallo at Senator Robach’s office at (585) 225.3650 to reserve a spot.