



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Neil D. Breslin

Senator Breslin Announces Legislation To Combat The Rising Heroin And Opioid Crisis

NEIL D. BRESLIN April 30, 2014

Legislation Would Increase Penalties for the Sale of Opioids; Provide Local Rehabilitation Services; Extend Insurance Coverage; Reduce Overdoses and Teen Heroin Abuse

(Albany, NY) Senator Breslin today announced the introduction of six Senate bills to combat the heroin and opioid abuse crisis impacting communities throughout New York. Bills included in this legislative package would increase penalties for selling opioids resulting in death, equip first responders with overdose stopping drugs, require health insurance providers to cover rehabilitation and anti-addiction medications, create a teen heroin abuse PSA campaign and provide opioid rehabilitation services in communities.

“The alarming rise in heroin and opioid use, particularly among teens and young adults, threatens our communities and demands immediate action,” Senator Breslin said. “We must treat this crisis as not only a criminal justice issue, but also a public health and welfare issue and we must address it accordingly. The bills introduced will better protect New Yorkers, save lives and make our state safer.”

The six pieces of legislation introduced by members of the Senate Democratic Conference will:

- Increase penalties for selling opioids that result in death;
- Equip first responders with overdose stopping drugs;
- Require health insurance providers to extend their coverage of rehabilitation services;

- Create a teen heroin abuse PSA campaign;
- Provide opioid rehabilitation services in communities; and
- Require health insurance providers to cover opioid-addiction treatment medications.

The six bills supported by Senator Breslin will help New York State better confront the growing heroin and opioid abuse crisis impacting communities across the state. The legislation was sponsored in reaction to testimony provided at a Senate Democratic Conference public forum held in December 2013 which brought together law enforcement personnel, medical professionals and family members of opioid abusers. The Senate Democratic Conference also drafted a report detailing the heroin crisis and the need to enact legislation to better protect New Yorkers and communities throughout the state.

“Protecting New York’s public health should not be a partisan issue, and we have a responsibility to act before the end of the current session,” Senator Breslin concluded. “I urge the Senate Republican Coalition to join with the Senate Democratic Conference to address the opioid epidemic and bring these common sense bills to the floor for a vote.”

For the full Senate Democratic Conference report, please visit:
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/221001135/NYSenDems-Heroin-Report>