



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Phil Boyle

## Press Release for Senator Joseph E. Robach Heroin Task Force Forum

PHIL BOYLE May 9, 2014

| ISSUE: **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, DRUGS**

| COMMITTEE: **HEROIN TASK FORCE**

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

*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 (4<sup>th</sup> floor, Rm. 406), 39 West Main Street, Rochester, NY 14614.

The hearing is part of the Joint Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction 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 recently enacted 2014-15 state budget included \$2.45 million for initiatives to provide prevention, treatment and addiction services to address the growing problems of heroin and opioid abuse. Also in March, the Senate passed legislation to help save lives by allowing authorized health care professionals to increase public access to Narcan/Naloxone which, if timely administered, can prevent an overdose death.

“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.

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.”

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