



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

Senator Martins Announces Legislative Agreement on Measures to Address Heroin & Prescription Drug Epidemic

JACK M. MARTINS June 19, 2014

| ISSUE: **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

Senator Jack M. Martins (R-Mineola) announced a three-way agreement between the Senate, Assembly, and Governor Cuomo on legislation he sponsored to address the growing heroin, opioid, and prescription drug epidemic. The legislation will be passed by the Senate and Assembly this week and signed into law by Governor Cuomo when it reaches his desk.

“This growing epidemic is affecting every community on Long Island and throughout New York State. Ensuring children receive timely, updated educational information about the dangers of drugs and giving enforcement officers stronger tools to catch those who are distributing drugs will help save lives. I applaud my colleagues for working together to keep our communities safe,” said Senator Martins.

S7910 will require the Commissioner of Education to recommend updates to the state’s drug abuse curriculum to the Board of Regents at a minimum of every three years. This will ensure that students receive the most up to date, age appropriate information about the abuse of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, including heroin, opioids, and other drugs which are more prevalent among school aged children. The Department of Education will craft the recommendations in collaboration with the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse and the New York State Department of Health. The Board of Regents

would be responsible for approving the updates.

S7906 will provide additional resources to the Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement (BNE) to investigate opioid prescription fraud. The BNE will be allowed to access the criminal histories and other key background information as they investigate and prosecute individuals who criminally prescribe or distribute opioids. This will give them stronger tools to curb opioid abuse at the source of distribution.

Heroin related deaths have reached an all-time high on Long Island. There were approximately 240 heroin related deaths over the last two years on Long Island. Additionally, the Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency (LICADD) has seen the number of individuals in treatment increase from just under 100 families a month for treatment in 2009 to more than 850 a month in 2014. According to LICADD, 80 percent of that increase is due to opiate and heroin addiction.

The measures are part of a package of bills agreed upon by the Senate, Assembly, and Governor Cuomo aimed at combating heroin use throughout New York State.