



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

Senator Serrano's Asthma Study Legislation Passes New York State Senate

JOSÉ M. SERRANO June 16, 2014

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(Albany, NY) - On Tuesday, June 17th, the New York State Senate passed Senator José M. Serrano's [bill S926](#), which mandates the New York State Department of Health to conduct an intensive study on the alarmingly high asthma rates in the Bronx and to use the findings to create a comprehensive remedial plan.

Asthma affects more than one million people in the state of New York at a rate of 1 out of every 11 people, which is one of the highest statewide rates in the country. For every ten thousand residents in the Bronx, 247 have had asthma-related emergency room incidents - nearly three times the statewide average. Approximately twenty percent of the children in the Bronx suffer from asthma and the Bronx County rate of asthma is approximately four to five times greater than the national average.

"It is my hope that by requiring the Department of Health to delve deep into the Bronx asthma epidemic and prepare a comprehensive remedial plan, we will have an effective and accurate road map to address this pressing public health issue," said Serrano. "For far too long we have been fighting an uphill battle against asthma in my district and throughout the Bronx. This bill will create a concrete plan of action that will allow residents of the Bronx to breathe easier knowing that we are one step closer to finding the cause and solution to the borough's disproportional asthma rates."

The legislation addresses the severe problem of asthma in the Bronx by ordering a study be conducted by some of the best public health professionals in New York State. Serrano's legislation demands that key components of the Bronx's asthma epidemic be scrutinized. These major points include an analysis of high risk neighborhoods examining disparities in income, race and ethnicity, public and private housing, proximity to major sources of air pollution, and an evaluation of the effectiveness of existing medical facilities. The study and remedial plan must be completed one year from being signed into law.

With the bill having passed the New York State Senate, it is now referred to the New York State Assembly for a vote, where it is sponsored by Assemblymember Luis R. Sepulveda.