



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rich Funke

Senate Passes Funke Legislation to Ban Designer Drug Flakka in New York State

RICH FUNKE June 15, 2015

| ISSUE: **DRUGS**

The New York State Senate today passed S.4743, a bill sponsored by Senator Rich Funke to ban the sale or distribution of any product containing alpha-PVP, the primary chemical compound in the synthetic street drug known as Flakka, Gravel, or Insanity. Users of alpha-PVP have been reported to experience powerful reactions and violent behavior, and experts have warned of its growing availability locally and across the country.

"Dealers often try to stay one step ahead of the law by tweaking their drugs, which is why Flakka is so similar to Bath Salts, both in chemical composition and the violent behavior they can cause," said Funke. "With law enforcement experts sounding the alarm on Flakka availability in our area, it's time to put the law in line with the threat to crack-down on alpha-PVP before it's too late. Thank you to my Senate colleagues for their support and to Rochester Assemblyman Harry Bronson for his efforts to address the Flakka challenge in the Assembly."

Alpha-PVP is a chemical cousin of cathinone, the amphetamine-like drug found in bath salts. Side effects of alpha-PVP can include hallucinations, delusions, extreme paranoia, and violent behavior. Like cocaine and methamphetamines, alpha-PVP derivatives often trigger a "comedown" period, resulting in users returning to the drug to avoid withdrawal symptoms,

which can lead to a cycle of abuse. In high doses, alpha-PVP may cause the body to reach high temperatures and lead to severe complications, like kidney damage and muscle breakdown.

Federal authorities recently cautioned that Flakka is becoming increasingly available in Western New York. The warning came after a Livingston County man was arrested for possessing over six pounds of the synthetic drug. Yesterday, an 83 year old Florida woman died of injuries she sustained after being brutally beaten by a man who is believed to have been under the influence of Flakka. Police allege that the assailant knocked on the victim's door at random before attacking her in her own home in a Flakka-fueled rage.

The bill is also being carried in the New York State Assembly by Assemblyman Harry Bronson (D – Rochester), where it was most recently referred to the Committee on Health.