



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ted O'Brien

## Fighting the heroin epidemic

TED O'BRIEN July 9, 2014



Dear friends,

A few weeks ago, as session came to a close, I voted for historic drug reform legislation that would combat the growing heroin crisis affecting communities throughout New York. This legislation enhances access to addiction treatment facilities, increases penalties for selling opioids that result in death, equips law enforcement with the necessary tools to crack down on drug dealers, provides first responders with treatments that can save the lives of people who overdose, and creates a teen heroin abuse public awareness campaign. These are all

important and necessary steps towards healing our communities.

I proudly stood with Governor Cuomo and my colleagues in the legislature as he signed this historic bipartisan package into law at the SUNY Rochester Educational Opportunity Center. The heroin epidemic has taken too many lives, and it is our responsibility as lawmakers to do whatever we can to help stop it. This package helps fulfill that responsibility and sends a message that we will not tolerate those who prey on our communities by distributing this insidious drug.

The passing of Philip Seymour Hoffman, a Fairport native, has brought much-needed local attention to the growing epidemic of heroin use. In Monroe County, admissions to treatment centers for these addictions have grown by 63 percent since 2004 – and by 238 percent among those aged 18 to 24. Young people in our community are overdosing more and more frequently. We must fight this epidemic and prevent these unnecessary casualties, and I believe this new set of laws will help New York State curb this troubling trend.

If you have any questions or concerns on this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me by sending me an email, either through the contact form on my site or directly at [obrien@nysenate.gov](mailto:obrien@nysenate.gov), or by calling my district office in Penfield at (585) 218-0034.

~~Ted O'Brien Signature~~

Very truly yours,

Ted O'Brien

New York State Senator

55th District

P.S.: For more specific information on the package of heroin and opioid abuse-related legislation that was signed into law this week, I encourage you to [visit the Governor's web site](#). - Ted

*Senator O'Brien represents the 55th district in the Senate, which is made up of the eastern half of Monroe County and the western half of Ontario County, including much of the city of Rochester.*