



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Senate Heroin Task Force Hosts Forum and Free Narcan Training on Long Island

CHRISTINE GEED (CROCI) April 7, 2016

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Oakdale, NY – Senator Thomas Croci (R, C, I – Sayville), member of the New York State Senate Heroin Task Force and also of the State Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, hosted the Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction on Long Island on Thursday. The Task Force has been traveling state-wide hosting public forums to gather testimony and input on the epidemic of increased heroin abuse in New York State.

Increasing numbers of fatal overdoses from heroin or opioid have spiked across the country, leading to national and local epidemics, including in New York with Suffolk County reporting 103 overdoses last year alone. Newsday also recently reported that Suffolk County has instituted a waiting list for their four clinics and currently has grown to over 200 people.

“The purpose of this forum is to gather the stakeholders and public together to address the scourge of the heroin epidemic that has reached across the United States and to here on Long Island. Deaths and overdoses continue to increase and we must gather as much information as we can in order to make meaningful change to combat heroin and opioid abuse together,” **stated Senator Croci.**

“Addiction is a disease that tears families apart. One person may use, but the whole family suffers,” **said Senator Murphy.** “We have coordinated these forums as a way to disseminate valuable information, and in turn, to hear from members of the community whose lives have been affected by this heinous epidemic. I encourage the people of Long Island to hear about the progress the Heroin Task Force is making and to contribute to our efforts.”

Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction Co-Chair Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda) said, “The Task Force has hosted several forums across the state and has heard countless, tragic stories from families who have lost loved ones to heroin and opioid abuse. I commend those families and those struggling with substance abuse for coming forward and sharing their stories. Ultimately, it’s their testimony that helps us to shape vital, sensible legislation that will help to curb the scourge of this widespread epidemic, put more drug dealers behind bars and save lives.”

Senator Ken LaValle, a member of the Heroin Task Force, said, “The heroin crisis is affecting nearly every community throughout Long Island. It’s widespread and touches individuals in every social and economic group. It’s critically important that we pull out all the stops to

halt this epidemic now.”

“My colleagues and I on the State Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction have won many battles in the war against heroin and opioid addiction over the years, but the fight is far from over. It is essential that we continue to hold these public meetings to obtain important feedback from treatment providers, law enforcement and those suffering from addiction across the State of New York. We also need to assure our communities that we are still fighting for them in Albany and that progress is being made,” **said Senator Phil Boyle.**

“Heroin remains an epidemic that affects every single community. Since its inception, the Task Force has been soliciting input from community leaders, law enforcement, treatment providers, and other stakeholders which has led to new laws to combat this epidemic comprehensively. Maintaining that dialogue and receiving additional feedback is of paramount importance as we continue to address this crisis on all fronts,” **said Senator Jack M. Martins (R-7th Senate District).**

“I’d like to thank Senator Croci for hosting this forum so the Task Force can continue to gather information that will help in our continuing efforts to address the heroin crisis we are facing in New York State,” **said Senator Amedore.**

"As members of the bipartisan Joint Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, my colleagues and I have worked very hard to deliver funding and gather testimony and input on the epidemic of increased heroin abuse in New York State. By partnering with our local police agencies, schools and community groups to hear testimony, it helps to raise awareness and bring together children, parents, doctors and other officials to have this dialogue and hopefully save lives," **said Senator Michael Venditto (R, C, I- Massapequa).**

Following the Senate Heroin Task Force hearing forum, Senator Croci held a free Narcan training event at the Sayville Ambulance Company. The registration for the event has closed because it has reached full capacity. Senator Croci will host future Narcan trainings scheduled to occur in July and September.

“The sheer demand at the Narcan trainings I have been hosting in Suffolk County is evidence of the heroin epidemic because hundreds are attending the trainings to learn how to save a life from an opioid overdose. We have reached capacity every time we have hosted an event,” **stated Senator Croci.**

All media inquiries should be directed to Senator Croci’s Communications Specialist, Christine Geed at (631) 398-8044 (call or text) or via email at geed@nysenate.gov. Inquiries for additional information should be directed to Senator Croci’s Press Secretary, Jennifer Romero at (631) 513-5657 or via email at jromero@nysenate.gov