



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

Senator Lanza & Assemblyman Cusick Announce Legislative Package in Response to Heroin & Opioid Crisis Plaguing our Communities

ANDREW J. LANZA June 15, 2016

| ISSUE: **COMBATING HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION**

Package of Bills Includes Limiting Length of Opioid Prescriptions, Mandatory Prescriber Education, & Eliminating Insurance Barriers to Treatment for Individuals in Need

Today

Senator Andrew Lanza (R – Staten Island) and Assemblyman Michael Cusick (D – Mid-Island) are announcing a package of legislation aimed at curbing the heroin and opioid crisis that has wreaked havoc across our Island and our State. The proposed legislation (A.10725, A.10726, A.10727) addresses many of the issues which have hampered the response to this crisis, including:

- The elimination of insurance barriers to addiction treatment so patients can get the immediate care they need, including a mandate that insurance companies use State criteria when determining the level of care an individual should receive.
- Reducing the prescription limit of opioids from 30 days to 7 days with exceptions only for chronic pain, mandate ongoing pain management education for all physicians and prescribers, and require data collection and quarterly reporting of overdoses on a county level by the State Department of Health.

- Requiring Hospitals to provide patients with available follow-up treatment options in their area, allowing more trained professionals to administer the overdose reversal drug Narcan, and expanding wraparound services for individuals upon their release from treatment including social services, legal aid, and peer support groups.

Senator Lanza said: "This announcement is the culmination of task force committees in both the Senate and Assembly and the Governor's office. The opioid abuse epidemic raging across the country has become one of the most important life and death issues of our time. This comprehensive package of laws should go a long way in turning back that tide and saving lives."

"The opioid and heroin crisis on Staten Island has grown to epidemic proportions and it is incumbent upon us to act as swiftly and decisively as possible for those affected by this crisis," said Assemblyman Cusick. "The legislation being announced today will help prevent individuals from becoming addicted in the first place, will make it easier for those who need treatment to receive the appropriate level of care, and will make certain we have the necessary data from all corners of our State to aid us in this fight".

The bills being announced are a direct result of Governor Cuomo's Heroin and Opioid Task Force, composed of treatment professionals, lawmakers, community members, and law enforcement officials from throughout New York State. Late last month the Task Force held a meeting at the CYO Center at Mount Loretto, where hundreds of Islanders voiced their concerns and brought forth suggestions that were an integral part of the legislation being announced today.

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