



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George Amedore

SENATOR AMEDORE JOINS ELECTED OFFICIALS AND ADVOCATES TO URGE GOVERNOR TO SIGN BILL TO PREVENT PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

GEORGE AMEDORE August 31, 2016

Senator George Amedore today called on Governor Cuomo to sign legislation (S.6962) to provide patients with easier access to FDA approved abuse-deterrent opioid medications. Senator Amedore was joined at a press conference at the Hospitality House, a treatment facility in Albany, by Assemblymember John McDonald, Albany County Sheriff Craig Apple, and John Coppola, Executive Director of the New York Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers, who joined him in support of the measure.

Abuse-deterrent opioid medications -- when taken as prescribed -- provide appropriate pain management, but are formulated so they are more difficult to alter and misuse, such as making them more difficult to crush or liquefy in order to snort or inject. This legislation makes them more accessible by requiring insurance plans to cover abuse-deterrent opioid prescription drug at the same levels as non-abuse deterrent opioid prescription drugs, prevents insurance plans from requiring a patient take a non-abuse deterrent opioid drug before a drug containing abuse-deterrent technology, and ensures that prior authorization requirements are applied equally to both abuse-deterrent and non-abuse-deterrent opioid

prescription drugs.

"Today is International Overdose Awareness Day, and prevention is key to reducing the number of overdoses we are seeing in communities throughout New York State," said Senator Amedore, who serves as co-Chair of the Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction. "Often, addiction begins with the misuse or abuse of prescription pain medications. It's important to embrace new technologies, make sure they are affordable and accessible to patients, and ultimately we will be able to cut down on the abuse of prescription pain medications that can lead to addiction."

"Our communities and families have and continue to struggle with this national epidemic of opioid and heroin addiction. Therefore it is critical that we explore all options when it comes to the four main areas of focus to address this epidemic -- education, enforcement, treatment and recovery. Technology continues to evolve and as we recognize the fact that drug addiction is a disease and not a moral failing, we need to allow for the proper tools to be in place to protect the public. Passage of A.10478/S.6962A will add another critical tool for health care providers to prevent drug addiction in the first instance, which is why I am supportive of this measure," said Assemblymember John McDonald.

"Our office has a multifaceted approach that includes law enforcement, education, and treatment. This legislation would be an additional tool to help fight this epidemic," said Albany County Sheriff Craig D. Apple

The legislation passed both houses of the Legislature earlier this year with overwhelming bipartisan support. The Governor's Heroin Task Force issued a recommendation earlier this year to make medications using abuse deterrent technology more readily accessible.

"At the end of the legislative session, we passed a comprehensive package of legislation to enhance prevention, treatment, and recovery services throughout the state in an effort to combat the heroin crisis we are facing here in New York. This bill would give us an additional resource to help prevent addiction -- we need to use every resource at our disposal, and I encourage the Governor to sign this bill into law," said Senator Amedore.

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