



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## SENATOR LANZA ANNOUNCES MEASURES TO INCREASE ENFORCEMENT OF DRUG TRAFFICKING AND DEALERS WHO TARGET CHILDREN

ANDREW J. LANZA March 2, 2017



Bills Enhance State's Ability to Prosecute Major Drug Operations and Those Who Sell Drugs at Parks and Playgrounds

The New York State Senate today passed two drug prevention bills, sponsored by Senator Andrew Lanza, to help fight the spread of heroin and opioid use in New York by strengthening enforcement of major drug traffickers and those who sell drugs in parks and playgrounds.

Senate bill S.301, cosponsored by Lanza, strengthens existing laws to increase successful prosecutions of major drug traffickers in New York. The measure would accurately reflect the nature of criminal enterprises by: changing the number of persons needing to be involved and charged as part of a drug organization from four to three; lowering the minimum required proceeds from the sale of controlled substances during a 12-month period from \$75,000 to \$25,000 to reflect the low street prices of heroin; and increasing law enforcement's ability to charge lower-level participants in drug trafficking.

Senator Lanza said, "Drug dealers have no shame. They prey on teenagers, even children, and brazenly push their toxic drugs in public parks and playgrounds. Under current law, major drug traffickers are able to avoid prosecution for their role in infecting our communities with the menace of heroin. This bill will more accurately reflect the seriousness of their heinous crimes and hold them more accountable for their actions."

In addition, the Senate passed legislation that aims to protect children in parks and playgrounds from drug dealers. The bill (S814A), also cosponsored by Senator Lanza, expands upon current New York State law, which includes increased penalties for people who sell drugs on school grounds or daycare centers, to include parks and playgrounds that may not be attached to schools. The measure would help law enforcement prosecute drug dealers who use parks and playgrounds in an effort to target children.

Lanza said, "Our parks and playgrounds should be a safe haven where children play without fear from drug dealers and the poison they sell. This bill will help to protect the safety of children and their families by providing enhanced penalties for the sale of controlled substances on park grounds and playgrounds. The Senate will continue to pass legislation that will help stop the scourge of heroin from destroying our communities and killing our children."

Both measures were among the recommendations from a report released last year by the Senate's Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction of which Senator Lanza is a member. The report detailed measures to provide greater resources to law enforcement to aid in combating this crisis, as well as improve prevention efforts, increase access to treatment, and expand recovery options.

The bills were sent to the Assembly.

###