



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Chris Jacobs

## Jacobs Says President Should Declare Opioid/Heroin Crisis a "National State of Emergency"

SENATOR JACOBS August 9, 2017

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(Buffalo NY) – New York State Senator Chris Jacobs, Co-Chair of the New York State Senate’s Heroin and Opioid Task Force, announced today his objections to the President’s decision not to declare the country’s heroin and opioid epidemic a “national emergency.”

Soon after taking office the President created a national commission to make recommendations to combat the deadly opioid crisis. Recently the commission issued its preliminary report and “the number one recommendation of the commission was that the President declare a national emergency,” said Jacobs. Yesterday, President Trump announced his decision not to declare such a state of emergency.

“Currently 142 Americans are dying every day due to overdoses and two-thirds of those are due to heroin/opioids,” said Jacobs. “That number of deaths is equivalent to a September 11<sup>th</sup> tragedy every three weeks.”

Since 1999, more than 560,000 Americans have died of overdoses, a death toll larger than the City of Atlanta.

The commission report states, “The first and most urgent recommendation ... (the President) declare a national state of emergency under either the Public Health Service Act or the Stafford Act.” The commissions stated that such a declaration would empower the President’s cabinet to take bold steps, using all the tools at their disposal to combat a drug epidemic unparalleled in terms of lives lost. Additionally, a national state of emergency would help focus the U.S. Congress and citizens throughout the country on the severity of the crisis.

“If this is not a national crisis, I don’t what is,” said Jacobs.