



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Ortt Announces \$400k for Substance Use Disorder Treatment Programs

ROBERT G. ORTT June 19, 2018

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



Today, Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I,Ref-North Tonawanda) joined his Senate Majority colleagues for the announcement of jail-based service funding for 17 county jails throughout the state. As the number of individuals affected by the heroin and opioid epidemic has continued to rise across the state, so has the number of incarcerated individuals with substance use disorders. This increase in those addicted has led to a new way of approaching imprisonment and treatment amongst New York's County jails.

After a successful pilot program in Albany County, which focused on recovery of individuals while incarcerated, legislators and advocates gathered to push for funding that would expand jail-based substance use disorder treatment programs across the entire state. At the press conference, it was announced that Niagara County would receive \$400,000 to implement substance use disorder recovery programs in its county jail.

Sen. Rob Ortt said, “The heroin and opioid epidemic plaguing our country requires an approach as complex and comprehensive as the challenge itself. Here in New York, we’re continuing to lead the way. With three-quarters of inmates dealing with substance abuse issues, the practical solution is to treat these individuals in a controlled environment. I’m proud to work with my partners in the law enforcement and treatment communities to provide jail-based treatment – a unique approach to encourage recovery and ensure fiscal responsibility.”

Niagara County Sheriff, James Voutour said, “The opioid epidemic affects us all and we would be remiss if we didn’t collaborate with our partners in law enforcement, public health, and lawmakers. We have been making significant strides in exploring alternative treatment measures within our correctional facility. I want to thank the Niagara County Mental Health Department for their partnership and forethought in addressing the addiction in Niagara County. I also want to thank Senator Ortt for his leadership and for the funding to continue our efforts to combat this epidemic.”

Director of Niagara County Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services, Laura Kelemen said, “Providing substance abuse treatment services to individuals while they are in jail is effective from both a recovery standpoint and from a fiscal perspective. Individuals who receive tools to achieve sobriety through education, individual and group counseling and effective transition services upon release are much more likely to remain involved in treatment, stable in the community and less likely to recidivate. We are

extremely grateful for Senator Ortt's continued efforts to fight the opiate crisis and to our Sheriff for his openness to providing these services to assist our citizens."

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