



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Chris Jacobs

Jacobs Secures \$400,000 To Expand Jail-Based Substance Use Treatment Program in Erie County

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(Buffalo, NY) – New York State Senator Chris Jacobs, a Co-Chair of the Senate’s Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, announced that he has secured an allocation of \$400,000 to support the implementation of a jail-based drug treatment and transition services program in Erie County. The program will be administered jointly by the Erie County Sheriff’s Office and the Erie County Department of Mental Health.

“Providing drug treatment services to incarcerated individuals is another example of the Senate’s Heroin Task Force implementing proven and effective methods to help people suffering from addiction get access to treatment as soon as possible,” said Senator Jacobs. “The significant funding we are announcing today and the services it will support will enable Erie County to reduce its recidivism rates, decrease operating costs at the county correctional facility and the holding center, and better transition people into treatment and recovery services upon their release.”

One of the biggest challenges in the fight against the heroin and opioid epidemic is getting placement of addicted individuals into treatment. In numerous hearings across the state last year, the Senate Task Force heard from many stakeholders that jail-based substance treatment programs filled a significant gap in the treatment and recovery services delivery system. Where they had been implemented, they had reduced recidivism rates as much as 28%, enabling county jails to see a reduction in operating expenses.

“In the midst of this opioid crisis, we were housing inmates with severe addiction issues, and my office was forced to develop a plan that not only treated the individual but one that would place them in a treatment facility for continued care after their release. However, the funding from the County Executive and legislature for Vivitrol injections and a discharge nurse can only go so far,” said Sheriff Timothy Howard. “Now, the funding provided by Senator Jacobs, will enable the Sheriff’s Division of Correctional Health to expand on this program and continue to work with Commissioner Ranney’s staff to develop a more comprehensive program to help the inmates break their addiction and reduce drug-related recidivism.”

“I thank Senator Jacobs for his support and advocacy in obtaining this funding,” said Michael Ranney, Commissioner of Mental Health for Erie County. “We are planning interventions that will provide education, recovery readiness and referrals to treatment in the community

for those struggling with a substance use disorder,” the Commissioner continued.

Citing the success of the jail-based programs in speeding up access to treatment, saving lives and saving money, Jacobs and his fellow Task Force Co-Chairs advocated for more funding in the state budget so the program could be implemented and expanded in jails throughout the state. Due to their efforts, a total of \$3.75 million was included in the budget and allocated to 17 county jails across the state. Erie County’s \$400,000 was one of four top awards made to jails that have an average daily population more than 250.

“I want to thank Sheriff Tim Howard, Mental Health Commissioner Michael Ranney, and all of our partners in the law enforcement and treatment communities who supported our efforts to secure the funding in this year’s budget,” said Jacobs. “I look forward to the positive outcomes and tangible results this program will produce as it saves lives and taxpayers dollars while ending the cycle of incarceration,” the Senator concluded.