



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Skoufis

## Skoufis Bill to Define Fentanyl in Health Law Passes State Senate

JAMES SKOUFIS June 12, 2019

| ISSUE: **FENTANYL, COMBATting OPIOID ADDICTION, COMMUNITY SAFETY**



**\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\***

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Senator James Skoufis' (D-Hudson Valley) bill related to the definition of fentanyl in the public health law passed the state Senate.

Fentanyl-like drugs that mimic the effects of fentanyl, but have different chemical structures, are increasingly being sold to individuals in this state. These "synthetic" fentanyl

drugs have life-threatening health effects similar to or greater than fentanyl, but are not at all regulated by existing law.

“I’ve heard one too many times from my constituents about the opioid deaths of their loved ones,” **said Senator James Skoufis**. “Right here in my Senate district, synthetic-fentanyl and opioid related deaths continue to plague families and tear at the fabric of our communities; this is why we must be steadfast in our approach to combating this epidemic. This bill addresses deficiencies in state law and gives prosecutors stronger ability to take action against those who threaten the health of our communities by dealing atrocious fentanyl-like drugs. I’m confident that closing this loophole will prevent dealers from being able to get away with this and I urge the Assembly to pass this before the end of session.”

“Under current New York State law, dealers in fentanyl analogues are always one step ahead of law enforcement,” **said Orange County District Attorney David M. Hoovler**. “Drug dealers can skirt the law by making simple changes in the chemistry of fentanyl, making those substances immune to regulation under the State’s Public Health Law. We wholeheartedly support this legislation, because it closes a dangerous loophole in the regulation of substances that are responsible for the deaths of many of our citizens.”

The National Institute on Drug Abuse reported that “in 2017, there were 3,224 overdose deaths involving opioids in New York—a rate of 16.1 deaths per 100,000 persons compared to the average national rate of 14.6 deaths per 100,000 persons. The greatest rise occurred among synthetic opioid-involved deaths...”

The bill has been delivered to the Assembly.

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