



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

## Harckham's "Good Samaritan" Bill Facilitates Administering of Overdose Drug

PETE HARCKHAM July 23, 2020

| ISSUE: **COMBATING HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION, ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE, OPIOID OVERDOSE PREVENTION, SUBSTANCE ABUSE**



*Albany, NY* – New legislation sponsored by New York State Senator Pete Harckham allowing “good Samaritans” to administer opioid overdose drugs like naloxone in retail stores, restaurants, hotels and other public accommodation venues without fear of legal liability has been approved in the Legislature.

Harckham's bill (S.8259) amends the current Public Health statute commonly known as the Good Samaritan Law, which protects individuals who act in good faith to help others. The new bill expands the entities authorized to possess, distribute and administer an opioid antagonist or "overdose reversal" drug to include retail bars, shopping malls, barbershops, beauty parlors, theaters, sporting or event center, inns and motels.

"This legislation, which fully permits the use of a proven life-saving drug, was much needed, and it will save lives," said Harckham, chair of the Senate Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. "The reality for many of our friends and neighbors with Substance Use Disorder is that help sometimes is not there when you need it most. This gives Good Samaritans a green light to save lives and will provide peace of mind to countless residents and business owners around the state."

New York State Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal, chair of the Assembly Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, is the other legislative sponsor of the bill.

Previously, it was lawful in New York just for people at-risk of an opioid overdose, their close associates and regulated prevention programs to possess and administer naloxone. In the past several years, this list grew to include school districts (plus private and charter schools) and their employees, BOCES and public libraries. Liability protections were extended to those who administered the drug in good faith as well.

"We commend Senator Harckham and Assemblymember Rosenthal for championing legislation to ensure more people will be protected under the lifesaving Good Samaritan Law, and we are encouraged by its approval in the Legislature," said Jasmine Budnella, drug policy coordinator at VOCAL-NY. "Our state is experiencing a devastating spike in overdose deaths that mirrors the height of the crisis, and the state should be using all the evidence-based tools to address it. We are grateful for Senator Harckham's tenacity and courage to fight day

in and out for the health, dignity, and lives for people who use substances.”

A short video of Sen. Harckham talking about his legislation and providing information on where to learn how to administer opioid overdose drugs like Narcan (naloxone) can be found here on his State Senate website.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2019-S8259

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Authorizes the use of opioid antagonists by public accommodations for opioid overdose prevention

April 29, 2020

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Pete Harckham**

Do you support this bill?