



NEW YORK STATE SENATE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY

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Senate Majority Empowers New Yorkers To Combat Opioid Abuse And Overdoses

(Albany, NY) The Senate Democratic Majority today will pass a series of legislation to combat the opioid epidemic affecting communities across New York State. The series of bills will fight opioid abuse and addiction by providing additional resources to those fighting and recovering from this disease. Specifically, the legislation will encourage and monitor the distribution and use of opioid antagonists, expand Medication Assisted Treatment Programs, increase access to abuse-deterrent drugs, and establish a pilot program for Infant Recovery Centers.

“Across New York State, communities have been impacted by the opioid epidemic and families have faced its tragic effects. The fight against opioid abuse is a long one but the Senate Majority remains committed to finding solutions that will end this crisis,” **Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins** said. “The bills advanced by the Senate Democratic Majority will support New Yorkers affected by opioid abuse by establishing recovery programs and expanding treatment options. I applaud Senator Pete Harckham, the bill sponsors, and all of my colleagues for supporting those fighting against opioid abuse.”

The legislation that is being passed by the Senate Democratic Majority includes:

- **Administering of Opioid Antagonist:** This bill, [S.5457](#), sponsored by Senator Pete Harckham, will expand the entities authorized to possess, distribute, and administer an opioid antagonist to reverse an opioid-related overdose to include public accommodations.
- **Online Directory of Opioid Antagonist Distributors:** This bill, [S.4499](#), sponsored by Senator Pete Harckham, will establish an online directory for distributors of opioid antagonist.
- **Opioid Risk Awareness:** This bill, [S.4277-A](#), sponsored by Senator Pete Harckham, will require health practitioners to discuss with patients the risks associated with certain pain medications before prescribing them, as well as alternative prescriptions available to them.
- **Expand Access to Medication Assistance Treatment:** This bill, [S.5935](#), sponsored by Senator Pete Harckham, will expand access for eligible Medicaid individuals to medications that treat substance use disorders.
- **Medication Assisted Treatment Program:** This bill, [S.2161](#), sponsored by Senator Jamaal Bailey, will establish a voluntary medication assisted treatment program at all state correctional facilities and local jails and will be offered to those fighting opioid addiction.
- **Access to Abuse Deterrent Formulations:** This bill, [S.6397](#), sponsored by Senator David Carlucci, will ensure abuse-deterrent drugs approved by the FDA are accessible to patients and that that insurance coverage does not disadvantage access for patients to drugs approved by the FDA as abuse-deterrent.

- **Infant Recovery Centers:** This bill, [S.5480](#), sponsored by Senator Gustavo Rivera, will require the Dept. of Health and The Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, to establish a pilot program of infant recovery centers for infants experiencing opioid or other drug withdrawal symptoms.

Chair of the Alcoholism And Substance Abuse Committee and Bill Sponsor, Senator Pete Harckham said, “With opioid addiction at epidemic levels in New York, I’m proud to sponsor a package of four bills that will expand access to medications that treat substance use disorder, ensure that physicians discuss risks of opioid use with patients and make it easier to save the lives of opioid overdose victims. No single bill can bring a halt to the epidemic. But, today’s package, as well as other substance use disorder bills passed earlier in session, are making a huge difference in the lives of substance users and their families.”

Chair of the Senate Health Committee and Bill Sponsor, Senator Gustavo Rivera said, “Every day the opioid crisis is claiming the lives of many New Yorkers. We need to take action now and employ every tool at our disposal to fight this epidemic and save lives. By including my bill to establish recovery centers for infants suffering from opioid or other drug withdrawal symptoms, New York is taking the necessary steps to ensure we win this battle against such a devastating public health crisis.”

Bill Sponsor, Senator Jamaal Bailey said, “Every person deserves to be treated in a humane manner, whether they are incarcerated or not. New Yorkers that are incarcerated should have access to adequate medical treatment- especially in such a time when we are suffering through an opioid crisis. It is unfortunate that instead of rehabilitating those that suffer from drug abuse, in New York’s prisons, individuals have been allowed to suffer on their own, often times leading to their death. I want to thank Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal, and my colleagues in government for passing the Medical Assisted Treatment Bill and other pieces of crucial legislation that will save the lives of many New Yorkers.”

Bill Sponsor, Senator David Carlucci said, “It’s time we look at how the Opioid crisis is starting and address it with doctors and insurance companies. 1 in 5 people receive prescription opioids long-term for non-cancer pain. To curb this dependency, I sponsor a bill to require insurance companies cover the cost of alternative abuse-deterrent drugs, which will help reduce addiction and allow people with a past drug history to safely receive pain relieving medicine.”

Bill Sponsor, Senator James Sanders, Jr. said, “While often prescribed legally as a pain reliever, the overuse or misuse of opioids can lead to addiction and even death. It is so important that we put into place measures to combat this crisis, which affects the public’s health as well as the social and economic welfare of all New Yorkers. Every day, more than 130 people in the United States die after overdosing on opioids, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. We need to take action to stop this madness, and I believe the bills we are introducing today are an important step in that process.”

Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. said, “I am pleased to join my colleagues in passing this comprehensive legislative package aimed at combating opioid abuse. We must continue to do all we can to fight the opioid epidemic that affects millions of families regardless of race, age, sex, or economic status; it simply does not discriminate. This legislation is an important step forward in helping all of our communities fighting on the front lines of the crisis.”

Senator Alessandra Biaggi said, “District 34 is no stranger to the grip of the opioid crisis that strangles all communities across the state. The number of lives lost necessitates bold action, and this package of bills achieves that aim. New York is attacking this epidemic by creating and expanding access to recovery treatment, and providing New Yorkers with the necessary support to heal.”

Senator John Brooks said, “I am proud to stand with my colleagues in the New York State Senate in taking essential action to combat the deadly and pervasive opioid epidemic that this state is currently facing. This legislation takes groundbreaking new steps to raise awareness of the risks of addiction and, most importantly, to

ensure equitable and affordable access to all types of addiction treatment. This epidemic has taken far too many American lives and the legislation passed today is a great step towards addressing this critical problem. I commend my colleagues in the Senate for making this a priority and putting the lives of all New Yorkers first.”

Senator Jim Gaughran said, “The opioid crisis has ravaged communities across New York, destroying countless families and lives. These bills are important protections to help address this epidemic and provide assistance to those struggling with opioid addiction. I thank Leader Stewart-Cousins and the bill sponsors for prioritizing New York families today with this package of bills.”

Senator Andrew Gounardes said, “The opioid epidemic has devastated our communities. We lost 359 Brooklynites to drug overdoses in 2017, and no neighborhood has been spared this tragedy. The vast majority of us know someone whose life has been turned upside down by addiction--their own, a friend’s or a family member’s. The bills we are passing in the NY State Senate today treat addiction as a medical issue. Expanded access to Medication Assisted Treatment and opioid antagonists has been shown to save lives. We owe it to those we have lost and their family members to pass this essential legislation.”

Senator Tim Kennedy said, “As the opioid crisis continues to persist, it is rare to find a New Yorker who has not been impacted by this epidemic. We cannot be discouraged. With the passage of these bills, New York has once again stepped up to support both treatment and prevention programs, and ensure that those suffering have access to critical resources needed to successfully navigate the recovery process.”

Senator Rachel May said, “The opioid crisis continues to ravage our communities, with no end in sight. We are finally seeing action against those responsible for the crisis, but we must expand access to assistance for all those suffering from opioid use disorder. Central New York has been hit especially hard by the opioid crisis, which is why it is so important that the Senate is advancing this slate of legislation that expands access to treatment for individuals of all walks of life.”

Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, “The opioid public health crisis has destroyed the lives of too many people and hurt too many families in Westchester, throughout the state, and our nation. I am pleased to vote for a package of legislation that strengthens addiction prevention strategies, expands access to addiction treatment, and makes finding opioid antagonists easier. I am also proud to work with colleagues who are committed to finding a path forward in the fight against the opioid epidemic.”

Senator Jen Metzger said, “The opioid crisis has hit the communities in my district particularly hard. Ulster, Sullivan, Orange, and Delaware counties are all faced with rates of opioid deaths that exceed the state average--in the case of Ulster County, it’s nearly double--and our hospitals are dealing with more overdose cases than we see in other parts of the state. The package of legislation we passed today will help our communities address this crisis by expanding access to prevention, treatment and recovery services.”

Senator Kevin Parker said, “This package of legislation proposed by my colleagues in the Senate Democratic Majority will create access to effective, community-based care and provide much-needed education as it relates to opioid usage and overdose. I look forward to supporting and passing this forward-thinking legislation.”

Senator Roxanne Persaud said, “New York’s opioid epidemic remains unyielding; too many are being affected and deeply suffering due to the consequences substance abuse has on individuals and their loved ones. We must prevent this by doing as much as possible to eliminate the possibility of addiction in the first place, and help those fighting, as well as their families, on their road to recovery.”

Senator Luis Sepúlveda said, “I commend my colleagues for leading on these set of legislation that will combat our current opioid crisis and change the outcome for millions of people who are suffering from opioid addiction. Our communities are currently facing devastating consequences from the opioid epidemic; therefore,

it is crucial for us to raise opioid risk awareness and provide accessible treatment for those in need and prevent future opioid misuse and overdoses.”

Senator Kevin Thomas said, “Too many families on Long Island and throughout New York have suffered from the devastating consequences of the opioid epidemic. We must work vigilantly to promote access to education, prevention, and treatment across our communities. This package of legislation takes a proactive and comprehensive approach that will expand access to life-saving medication assisted treatment options. I commend my Senate colleagues for their leadership and continued efforts to combat this epidemic.”

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