



NEWS FROM SENATOR KEMP HANNON

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SENATOR HANNON ANNOUNCES PASSAGE OF THE DRUG TAKE BACK ACT

East Meadow, NY – New York State Senator Kemp Hannon (R-Nassau) joined today with elected officials and stakeholders to announce enactment of ([S9100](#)) the Drug Take Back Act into law. This new law creates a unified, statewide drug take back program that will provide significantly more opportunities to safely dispose of unused medications by requiring all chain pharmacies to offer collection, thus reducing medication misuse and preventing drugs from being improperly disposed of into the environment. The program holds pharmaceutical companies responsible for the cost of proper drug disposal, thereby saving government and taxpayer's money.

Senator Hannon, Chair of the Senate's Health Committee, stated, "I am proud that by enacting this law, New York will be a national leader in providing consumers with free and convenient drug take back options paid for by manufacturers. This initiative will improve both the environmental health and the physical health of all New York citizens."

Assemblywoman Gunther stated, "Studies show that between 60-70% of teenagers who abuse prescription drugs get them from their parents' medicine cabinets. The opioid crisis is crushing our communities and this is another tool in fighting this terrible epidemic. We've made tremendous strides in recent years to expand the options consumers have to take back their unused medications, but this is by far the biggest step. This bill gives customers a take-back option at every single chain pharmacy in the state, and it does so without any cost to the consumer."

Excess medications sitting in cabinets are ripe for abuse, and one of the most common ways people become addicted and addicts feed their habits. Communities, law enforcement, elected officials and pharmacies holding special take back days is just not enough. Over the last 14 annual drug take back events, over 4,508 tons of unused prescription drugs have been collected. However, unused medications are still getting into the wrong hands and having a devastating effect. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports, every 16 minutes

one U.S. citizen dies from a drug overdose. This program will increase the impact by ensuring drug take back is conveniently available every day. Although the pilot Pharmaceutical Take Back Program, which launched in December 2017, distributed 87 collection boxes to ensure easier disposal of unused medication, this new law will expand locations of disposal to over 2,000 locations.

Dr. Jeffrey Reynolds, President and CEO of Family and Children's Association, stated, "Given that most people get their first taste of opioids from medications left in the family medicine cabinet, the proper removal and disposal of leftover medications is absolutely critical to our efforts to adequately address the opioid crisis. Long Island has been hit and we thank Senator Hannon for his multi-faceted and tireless efforts to address the epidemic in Nassau/Suffolk and statewide."

Patrick J. Ryder, Nassau County Police Commissioner, stated, "The passage of Senator Hannon's legislation on the Drug Take Back Act is a common sense approach to protecting not only our residents, but children who may come in contact with these dangerous and lethal medications. Whether it be accidental or voluntary exposure, all of us have to work together to ensure that every last pill that is not being used is accounted for and not lying around in a medicine cabinet or inappropriately discarded with the possibility of inflicting harm to any one of us. We have seen all too often how these medications come into the wrong hands and leave us with devastating results."

Ed Campbell, Region Director of CVS Health, stated, "CVS Health is dedicated to helping the communities we serve address and prevent opioid abuse, which is why we've expanded access to safe medication disposal to 50 CVS Pharmacy locations across New York State and 750 locations across the U.S. We deeply appreciate Senator Hannon's leadership in recognizing the importance of increasing access to sites where people can safely dispose of unwanted medication and look forward to working with him as this law is implemented."

Proper disposal of drugs will also protect the state's water supplies. Improper disposal by means of flushing not only results in contamination of water bodies but also negatively impacts aquatic life. A U.S. Geological Survey conducted in 1999 and 2000 found 80 percent of rivers and streams tested to have traces of antibiotics, hormones and steroids in them. Last year, the Senate led the way by securing a historic investment of \$2.5 billion to improve and protect our water resources. Keeping drugs out of our water supplies is another important and necessary step.

Paul Stauder, President of Covanta Environmental Solutions, stated, "We are proud to provide the safe and environmentally sound disposal of unwanted medications at our Energy-from-Waste facilities. Preventing the potential abuse of these drugs is of utmost importance, but also making sure our environment and water isn't negatively impacted from improper disposal is essential as well. We commend New York State and Senator Hannon for making this important issue a priority."

Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment, stated, "The Drug Take Back Act is a game changer for New York residents. In numerous homes throughout New York, there lurks unwanted prescription drugs that pose a danger to our children

and our environment. Safe and convenient access to safe disposal options has become a necessity in today's society. The King Kullen pharmacy program has collected 9,800 pounds of unwanted drugs in the last 3 years, and this law will make similar take-back options available to all New Yorkers. We are extremely grateful for Senator Kemp Hannon's leadership and determination to address this issue. This law establishes one of the strongest safe disposal programs in the nation."

This legislation will take effect January 6, 2019.

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