



NEWS FROM
Senator Chris Jacobs
REPRESENTING THE 60TH NEW YORK SENATE DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 19, 2017

CONTACT: Paul Pfeiffer

716-854-8705

**JACOBS SECURES PASSAGE OF BILLS TO AID IN
FIGHT AGAINST HEROIN & OPIOID ADDICTION**
*Legislation included in package of bills advanced by
Senate Task Force to combat drug abuse*

(Albany, NY) – New York State Senator Chris Jacobs (60th SD) announced passage of two bills he sponsored to fight the heroin epidemic, one enabling law enforcement to prosecute dealers mixing the deadly drug fentanyl in the heroin they sell (S5884) and the second making permanent a successful “Peer Engagement” program for recovering addicts (S6509A).

“While the epidemic of heroin and opioid addiction is both a national and statewide concern, Buffalo and Western New York have been hit especially hard,” Senator Jacobs said. “I am confident that my two bills that passed today will have a positive impact, first on stemming the flow of these dangerous substances, and second by better assisting people in their recovery efforts,” Jacobs added.

Fentanyl and fentanyl-combined drugs have been a major driver in many overdoses and deaths that have occurred across the state. To better control this extremely potent drug, the Jacobs bill that passed will add six new derivatives of fentanyl to the controlled substance schedule regulated by the Department of Health.

The Peer Engagement program connects specialists with knowledge of alcohol and substance abuse treatment systems with addicts who have undergone an opioid overdose reversal, or been discharged from a substance abuse related emergency visit. The bill Senator Jacobs secured passage of makes the program permanent by authorizing the health commissioner to develop and administer a certification and standards process for peer engagement specialists. It also requires emergency, medical and other first responders to connect people they treat to the program.

“Because they have experienced the same battles with addiction, peer engagement specialists have a level of expertise and credibility that cannot be accomplished through any professional training,” said Jacobs. “They have proven to be extremely effective in helping other people who have experienced addiction and overdose.”

Jacobs' bills were part of a broader package of legislation supported by the Heroin and Opioid Addiction Task Force. They are in addition to the record level \$214 million in funding included in the budget approved in April to strengthen education, prevention and recovery services.

“Stiffening penalties for drug dealers, restricting the flow of illegal substances and implementing proven methods of treatment for people in recovery are common sense and strategic approaches to combatting the heroin and opioid epidemic,” said Jacobs. “These measures reinforce that our resolve to fight against this public health crisis is as strong as ever.”

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