



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Kate Miller of Queensbury a NYS Senate Woman of Distinction

BETTY LITTLE May 31, 2011

| ISSUE: **HEALTH**



Recognized for efforts to raise awareness of prescription drug side effects

Kate Miller of Queensbury was recognized Tuesday evening as a New York State Senate Woman of Distinction for her successful efforts to improve prescription drug labeling and raise awareness of potentially harmful side effects. The accomplishments of 55 women from across New York State were highlighted at a ceremony in Albany.

Miller's son, Cody, took his life after using the drug Singulair for 17 days to treat seasonal allergies. He did not have a history of depression or mental illness but while on the drug Cody quickly became agitated and increasingly anxious and told his parents he did not understand why he felt so badly.

Just months earlier, depression was determined a possible side effect of the medicine. However, there had been no public notification and most doctors and pharmacies were unaware of the serious side effect.

Miller intensively lobbied the FDA and drug maker Merck to examine and spread awareness of possible side effects. In August 2009, two years after Cody's death, the FDA required the drug include the warning of neuropsychiatric behaviors, including anxiety, hallucinations and suicide.

Senator Betty Little nominated Miller for the recognition.

“Kate’s determination is remarkable,” said Senator Betty Little. “She has spent countless hours researching, calling, writing and advocating to make this change. Her effort to require the critically important notification, warning others to the serious side effects, will prevent future tragedies. She’s made a real difference and is to be commended.”

Kate Miller said: “I was honored to be in the room with so many wonderful and outstanding women. What a wonderful event. The fact that I was chosen by Senator Little, who I believe is one of the most remarkable woman I have ever met, in itself is a blessed honor. She has shared with me a most precious gift, and I will remember this night always.”

Miller and her husband, Dave, also started the “Hike for Hope -- Cody's Climb,” an annual event in Lake George. About 200 people participated in the 3rd annual hike up Prospect Mountain this past Sunday, raising \$13,000 for suicide prevention.

Miller is continuing to push that the drug bear a so-called “black box” label, the most serious FDA warning.

More than 450 women have been honored as Women of Distinction over the past 14 years. Nominees have included women from the worlds of business, academia and civic life, as well as those who have performed heroic or selfless acts, made significant discoveries, or excelled against difficult odds.