



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John A. DeFrancisco

Senator DeFrancisco's "Good Samaritan Bill" Signed Into Law

JOHN A. DEFRANCISCO July 22, 2011

| ISSUE: **DRUGS**

Senator John A. DeFrancisco (R-I-C, Syracuse) announced that his bill, the "Good Samaritan Bill," (S4454-B) was signed into law yesterday by Governor Andrew Cuomo. The law encourages a witness or victim of a drug or alcohol related overdose to seek medical attention without being punished for drug or alcohol possession. The law is to take effect in 60 days.

"Fear of prosecution has become an obstacle in seeking medical care for someone suffering from a drug or alcohol overdose," said Senator DeFrancisco. "This law will change that by encouraging people to call emergency services when lives are in jeopardy."

The new law acknowledges that most people who are in need of treatment for an overdose are unable to seek it for themselves. The law encourages those who may be with the person to obtain health care for the individual who has overdosed.

"Certainly we should not disregard the seriousness of illegal drug use and overdose, however, neither should we subject those who overdose to a death penalty," continued Senator DeFrancisco, "This law ensures proper treatment in these deadly scenarios."

This legislation was crafted with input from New York State District Attorney's Association. There have been overdose instances both locally in Syracuse and on Long Island that led to

the proposal for this legislation.

“This law will significantly help prevent deaths from drug or alcohol overdose in New York State,” concluded Senator DeFrancisco, “I applaud Governor Cuomo for signing it into law.”