



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

Sen. Kennedy Joins A.G. Schneiderman in Push to Combat Prescription Drug Abuse

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY March 6, 2012

| ISSUE: **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, DRUGS**

Attorney General holds press conference in Western New York to advance I-STOP legislation

ALBANY, N.Y. – Senator Timothy M. Kennedy, D-58th District, stands with Attorney General Eric Schneiderman in urging the state to take action to combat prescription drug abuse. While Senator Kennedy was in Albany Tuesday and unable to attend the Attorney General’s press conference in Western New York, he has been stressing the urgency of addressing this epidemic and pushing his colleagues to support prescription drug abuse reform.

Senator Kennedy co-sponsors the Attorney General’s Internet System for Tracking Over-Prescribing (I-STOP) bill and is carrying four bills named the “Michael David Israel Laws” to compliment the AG’s bill. The Michael David Israel Laws are named for a young Western New Yorker who took his own life after battling addiction to painkillers. While Michael Israel’s story is tragic, it unfortunately is not unique. It’s a prime example of why the state needs to reform the system and prevent prescription drug abuse.

“Prescription drug abuse has forced far too many families to suffer tragedies. The wrath of this epidemic has been felt nationally and locally in Western New York where we’ve heard tragic stories of people falling victim to painkiller addiction,” said Senator Kennedy. “The I-

STOP legislation is an important solution to fight this growing epidemic. I'm proud to support it, and I thank Attorney General Schneiderman for his relentless efforts to pass this critical measure. I also want to commend the family advocates who have been the driving force behind this reform movement. The State Legislature needs to listen to these grieving families and take action to fix this broken system before another life is lost and another family has to endure their pain."

In addition to the Attorney General's critical I-STOP bill, Senator Kennedy continues to push the Michael David Israel Laws, which include the:

- Patient Information Act (S.6179/A. 9097): Requires disclosure of addiction risks for certain prescription drugs; requires physicians, nurses and pharmacists to provide information on prevention, mitigation and treatment of prescription drug addiction.
- Physician Training Law (S.6180/S.9102): Relates to continuing medical education requirements for doctors, nurses and pharmacists; requires three hours of training on the prevention, treatment and mitigation of opiate analgesics and psychotropic drug addiction.
- Addiction Transition Law (S.6181/A.9093): Requires the Department of Health to promulgate guidelines to help physicians transition patients from substances with a high risk of addiction to those with a low risk.
- Controlled Substance Registry Reform Act (S.5049A/A.9121): Requires practitioners to check the controlled substance registry before prescribing painkillers and directs the commissioner of public health to establish an enforcement system. This measure is similar to I-STOP. One difference is this legislation calls for physicians to have access, through the registry, to information about a patient's history of admittance to substance abuse centers. This allows physicians to actively review addiction indicators prior to prescribing controlled substances.

The Michael David Israel Laws are being carried in the Assembly by Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes.