



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James S. Alesi

Senator Jim Alesi / Senate Pass Legislation to Fight Prescription Drug Abuse and Addiction

JAMES S. ALESI June 11, 2012

| ISSUE: **HEALTH, DRUGS**



THE LANDMARK **I-STOP LAW**

Saving Lives by Preventing
Prescription Drug Abuse

Includes Real-Time Prescription Drug Tracking To Eliminate "Doctor Shopping," Improves Education and Awareness for Prescribers, Creates Safe Disposal Program

Senator Jim Alesi joined members of the Senate today to pass legislation to establish the Internet System for Tracking Over-Prescribing (I-STOP) – an initiative targeted at combating prescription drug

abuse and addiction. This important legislation, S.7637, would require the Department of Health (DOH) to create and maintain a real-time, online reporting system to monitor the prescribing and dispensing of certain controlled substances. Health care practitioners and pharmacists would be required to report specific information to the database when certain controlled substances are prescribed and dispensed.

“Increased occurrences of prescription drug abuses in New York State have emphasized the need to streamline communication among practitioners, pharmacists, and law enforcement,” said Senator Alesi. “By providing health care practitioners and pharmacists with a centralized database, we can help to avoid over-prescribing and provide treatment to patients who abuse prescription drugs. Ultimately, this is a public safety issue, and it is vital to ensure the health and well-being of all New Yorkers.”

In addition, practitioners will be required to consult the DOH’s Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) Registry before prescribing or dispensing controlled substances listed on Schedule II, III, or IV and then report relevant data to the system once the prescription is written and filled. I-STOP would also allow pharmacists to consult the PMP Registry before dispensing a controlled substance – helping to combat “doctor-shopping” and illegal drug trafficking.

“We must work harder to prevent individuals from receiving prescriptions from multiple sources to safeguard that patients’ prescription use is legitimate – not lethal. I am proud to support this important legislation verifying that prescriptions are medically necessary and are not being dispensed to abusers, addicts, or drug dealers,” Senator Alesi continued. “Key to this legislation is the continuing education component for practitioners, pharmacists, and law enforcement about proper use of the system.”

“The rise of prescription drug abuse in New York and across the country demands a better system for both our health care providers and law enforcement officials to track the flow of potentially dangerous substances,” said Attorney General Schneiderman, who has been a vocal advocate for I-STOP.

This legislation requires the Department of Health to institute a program for the safe disposal of unused controlled substances by consumers. Through the program, DOH will work with local police departments to establish secure disposal sites for controlled substances on the premises of police stations. At these sites individuals can voluntarily surrender unwanted and unused controlled substances.

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, prescription drug abuse is the second most prevalent illegal drug problem in the United States. Prescription painkillers are responsible for roughly 15,000 deaths a year in the United States and 475,000 emergency room visits, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

#####