



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Coalition for Community Services Presents “Champion Award” to Senator Lanza and Assemblyman Cusick at State Capitol

ANDREW J LANZA March 6, 2014

| ISSUE: **PRESCRIBED DRUGS OR PRESCRIPTIONS**



### ***Lawmakers Acknowledged for Their Landmark I-Stop Law Curbing Prescription Drug Abuse***

The Coalition for Community Services presented the Champion Award to Senator Andrew Lanza (R-Staten Island) and Assemblyman Michael Cusick (D-Mid Island) for their leadership in substance abuse prevention and treatment. The group commended the lawmakers for introducing the landmark legislation known as I-STOP, which is now law.

The I-STOP legislation, signed into law on August 27th, 2012 created, among other items, a “real time” prescription drug tracking system to provide enhanced information to prescribers and pharmacists about controlled substances. The law requires pharmacists to report the controlled substances they dispense on a "real time" basis and requires health care practitioners to consult the database (PMP Registry) to check their patients’ controlled substance history before prescribing those drugs most prone to abuse. The bill also implemented a mandatory phase in of electronic prescribing which will eliminate the need for paper prescriptions and thereby eliminate the alteration, forgery or theft of prescription pads.

The Coalition for Community Services, an alliance of New York community-based substance abuse agencies, travels to the State Capitol each year with a large delegation of members and clients to lobby for funding for their programs and services that help to treat and rehabilitate individuals with substance abuse. Some of those groups include Dynamic Youth Community, Inc., Camelot Counseling and Staten Island Partnership Community Wellness Tackling Youth Substance Abuse.

Luke Nasta, Public Policy Officer for the Coalition said, “As communities like Staten Island have been particularly devastated by the prescription drug epidemic and the abuse of other drugs such as heroin, the I-Stop Law introduced by both Senator Andrew Lanza and Assemblyman Michael Cusick was an important first step in combating this terrible issue. It calls attention to the need for ongoing support for state-funded services to support programs like Camelot of Staten Island and others like it throughout New York State.”

Assemblyman Cusick reiterated his commitment to the I-STOP law at the ceremony: “We will continue the work we have begun to provide appropriate controls to restrict access of abusers and ensure those who profit from the abuse face the necessary consequences. The toll this fast-growing drug abuse problem has taken on our communities is devastating and the next logical step will be to work with other states to link our I-STOP data base with the surrounding states to save as many lives as possible.”

Senator Lanza said, “The prescription drug abuse epidemic has ravaged families from one end of our state to the other. I wholeheartedly thank and commend the Coalition for Community Services and the work they do to save lives by providing support and drug counseling to those in need. It is my hope that the I-STOP law will give doctors and pharmacists the tools necessary to help New Yorkers avoid falling prey to prescription drug abuse and to help those under its influence.”