



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Martin J. Golden

Joint Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction Announces Schedule for 12 Forums to Be Held Statewide

MARTIN J. GOLDEN April 4, 2014

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The New York State Senate Majority Coalition today announced the schedule for the Joint Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction.

Twelve forums will be held statewide to solicit input on the rise in the use of heroin and opioids and to develop legislative recommendations for treating and preventing addiction and its consequences. The first forum is being held this Tuesday, April 8, 2014, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Van Nostrand Theatre of Suffolk County Community College's Brentwood Campus, 1001 Crooked Hill Road, Brentwood. Interested members of the public are invited to attend and participate in the discussion. For more information, please call (631) 665-2311. The full schedule is below.

The bipartisan task force is chaired by Senator Phil Boyle (R-C-I, Suffolk County), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. Members will examine the issues and solicit input from experts and other stakeholders about addiction prevention and treatment options, the rise in heroin and opioid use, and the potential for drug-related crimes and other negative community impacts. The task force will then develop recommendations which will be used to draft legislation to address the issues raised.

“The numbers are staggering,” said Senator Boyle. “Every day we hear of one tragedy after another. It is now time that we galvanize as a unified state to combat heroin and opioid addiction. Region by region, throughout the State of New York, we will be reaching out to every community for innovative ways to tackle this problem. We want to hear from parents, teachers, students, doctors, coaches and advocates of every shape and size to get to the core of this heroin epidemic.”

The forum will include members of the task force, experts in the fields of education, law enforcement, mental health and substance abuse, municipal officials, and individuals directly affected by opioid abuse.

Heroin’s deadly affects are well established, and overdoses are on the rise across the state. Data released by Newsday reported that heroin “killed a record 121 people in Nassau and Suffolk in 2012 and at least 120 last year -- the two highest totals ever recorded.” The Buffalo News reports that 29 people died of heroin overdoses in Erie County in 2013, “almost a third more than the year before.” The Syracuse Post Standard reported that heroin-related deaths “have climbed rapidly in Onondaga County -- from two in 2010 to 24 in 2013.” In New York City, the Times reported that “after several years of decline,” heroin-related overdose deaths increased 84 percent from 2010 to 2012.

Due to the Senate Majority’s efforts, the recently enacted 2014-15 state budget included \$2.45 million for initiatives to provide prevention, treatment and addiction services to address the growing problems of heroin and opioid abuse. Also in March, the Senate passed legislation (S6477B) to help save lives by allowing authorized health care professionals to increase public access to Narcan/Naloxone which, if timely administered, can prevent an overdose death.

2014 Joint Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction Schedule:

Long Island:

April 8, 2014 - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Suffolk County Community College Brentwood Campus, Van Nostrand Theatre, 1001 Crooked Hill Road, Brentwood, Suffolk County. The public is invited; For more information: (631) 665-2311.

Western New York:

April 15, 2014 - 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Monroe County Office Building, 39 West Main Street, Rochester, Monroe County. For more information: (585) 225-3650.

Central New York:

April 15, 2014 - 5 to 7 p.m.: 1st Floor Conference Room, State Office Building, 207 Genesee Street, Utica, Oneida County. For more information: (315) 793-9072; and

May 8, 2014 - 12:30 p.m. registration, forum held from 1 to 3 p.m.: Auburn City Hall Chambers, 24 South Street, Auburn, Cayuga County. For more information: (315) 568-9816.

Capital District:

April 23, 2014 - 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Hudson Valley Community College, Bulmer Telecommunications Center (BTC) Auditorium, 80 Vandenberg Ave., Troy, Rensselaer County. For more information: (518) 455-2381.

Hudson Valley:

April 24, 2014 - 6 p.m.: Paladin Center Tactical Training Facility, 39 Seminary Hill Rd., Carmel Hamlet, Putnam County. For more information: (845) 531-9796; and

May 15, 2014 - 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Newburgh Armory Unity Center, 321 South William Street, Newburgh, Orange County. For more information: (845) 576-1270.

North Country:

April 25, 2014 - 10 a.m.: Clinton County Government Center, 137 Margaret Street, Plattsburgh, Clinton County. For more information: (518) 455-2811.

Southern Tier:

April 28, 2014 - 9:30 a.m.: SUNY Oneonta, 108 Ravine Pkwy, Oneonta, Otsego County. For more information: (607) 432-5524.

New York City:

May 1, 2014 - 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Senate Hearing Room, 19th Floor, 250 Broadway, Manhattan. For more information: (718) 238-6044.

Staten Island:

May 2, 2014 - 1 to 4 p.m.: Jewish Community Center of Staten Island auditorium, 1297 Arthur Kill Road, Staten Island. For more information: (518) 455-3215.

Catskills:

May 9, 2014 - 2 to 4 p.m.: Legislative Hearing Room, 2nd Floor, Sullivan County Government Center, 100 North Street, Monticello, Sullivan County. For more information: (845) 344-3311.

Senator Martin J. Golden (R-C-I, Brooklyn) said: "I look forward to working with my colleagues to expand upon the I-STOP legislation to reduce drug addiction and abuse. My district has been witness to the increase of heroin and painkillers causing deaths in our youngsters and destroying families. We must start to reverse these numbers and save lives here in New York."