



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

SENATOR LARKIN TO HOLD FORUM ON HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION ON MAY 15th IN NEWBURGH

WILLIAM J. LARKIN JR. May 6, 2014

| ISSUE: **HEALTH, CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, DRUGS**

Senator Bill Larkin (R-C, Cornwall-on-Hudson) today announced that the Hudson Valley regional forum of the Joint Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction will be held on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. at the Newburgh Armory Unity Center in Newburgh, New York.

The forum is one of 12 being held throughout the state by the bipartisan task force created to solicit input on the rise in the use of heroin and other opioids in New York and to develop legislative recommendations for treating and preventing addiction and its consequences.

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.

Senator Larkin said: “We have seen the devastation heroin can bring to a community. It impacts families, friends and neighbors and leaves people feeling lost with nowhere to turn for assistance. The upcoming forum will allow us to explore the impact heroin and other opioids are having in the Hudson Valley and the best way we can address the needs of our first responders and our local communities as they strive to curb this plague in our midst.”

The task force is chaired by Senator Phil Boyle (R-C-I, Suffolk County), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. Task force members include Vice-

Chair David Carlucci (D-Rockland), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities; Vice-Chair Michael Nozzolio (R-C, Fayette), Chairman of the Senate Codes Committee; Senator Greg Ball (R-C-I, Patterson), Senator John Bonacic (R-C-I, Mount Hope), Senator Pat Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma), Senator Martin J. Golden (R-C-I, Brooklyn), Senator Joseph A. Griffo (R, Rome), Senator Kemp Hannon (R, Nassau), Senator Andrew Lanza (R-I-C, Staten Island), **Senator William Larkin (R-C, Cornwall)**, Senator Betty Little (R-C-I, Queensbury), Senator Carl L. Marcellino (R, Syosset), Senator Kathleen A. Marchione (R-C, Halfmoon), Senator Jack Martins (R-C-I, Mineola), Senator George Maziarz (R-C, Newfane), Senator Thomas O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats), Senator Patty Ritchie (R-C, Heuvelton), Senator Joseph Robach (R-C-I, Rochester), Senator Diane Savino (D, Staten Island/Brooklyn), Senator James L. Seward (R-I-C, Oneonta), and Senator Cathy Young (R-I-C, Olean).

Members of the task force 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.

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. In addition to the creation of the task force, the Senate passed legislation ([S6477B](#)) in March 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.