



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

Senator Bonacic Announces the Passage of Bills Recommended by Heroin Task Force

JOHN J. BONACIC June 10, 2014

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COMPREHENSIVE LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE AIMS TO SAVE LIVES

Measures Will Help Address Growing Heroin and Opioid Use in New York

Senator John Bonacic announces that the New York State Senate today will act on 23 bills to address issues surrounding the increase in heroin and opioid abuse, addiction, and related crimes in New York. The bills are part of a comprehensive legislative package proposed by the bipartisan New York State Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction in a report released in May.

This bill package begins the legislative response laid out in the report to prevent drug abuse and overdoses; increase the availability and efficacy of addiction treatment; and enhance the tools provided to law enforcement to keep heroin off the streets.

“This has been a long road for the Senate Task Force members in conducting these forums across the state, and to craft such legislation that will help save lives,” says Senator Bonacic. “However, this is nothing compared to the lives lost, the suffering of family members and all those addicted to this drug. I thank my fellow task force members, but most importantly, the families, treatment counselors, law enforcement and recovery professionals who told us their stories, and their suggestions.”

In March 2014, New York State Senate Majority Coalition Co-Leaders Dean Skelos and Jeffrey Klein created the Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction to examine the alarming rise in use of heroin and opioids that has claimed lives and hurt families across New York State. The Task Force is chaired by Senator Phil Boyle.

Senate Task Force members listened to 53 hours of testimony and spoke with more than 2,000 residents about the tragedy of the state's heroin and opioid epidemic. The Senate's bipartisan **Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction** then issued a special report, entitled: **Solutions to New York's Heroin Epidemic** which made legislative recommendations to help address the drug abuse, addiction and drug related crimes in New York that have been claiming lives and destroying families in communities throughout the state.

Senator Bonacic, a member of the Task Force, hosted a forum in Sullivan County on May 19, 2014, with more than 100 people in attendance, and a panel of speakers including a parent who lost his son in a heroin-related crime.

The legislation is now in the Assembly.

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