



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Statement on Governor and Suny Plan to Combat Heroin Abuse

PATTY RITCHIE June 11, 2014

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Across our state and our nation, the spike in heroin use has meant the loss of life, increased crime and heartbreak amongst families and friends of those who use this deadly drug. Today, I applaud Governor Cuomo for his announcement of a statewide initiative to combat the rise of heroin use. This initiative—which includes stepping up law enforcement efforts, an awareness campaign taking place at public college and university campuses throughout the state—will greatly help to address the heroin epidemic.

As a member of the Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, I've heard from many individuals who are on the ground level about what can be done to stop the spread of heroin. Time and time again, one of the top suggestions has been educating individuals—especially young people—about the dangers the drug presents. As we saw last month at SUNY Oswego, heroin is a deadly drug, with very serious consequences. I am extremely pleased that the Governor and SUNY leaders are focusing their attention on increasing awareness at colleges across our state.

I believe that this new initiative, combined with the work done by the Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, as well as the more than twenty bills passed by the Senate this week addressing the issue of heroin abuse represent a significant step in the right direction when it comes to stopping the spread of heroin and ensuring those seeking help for addiction get the assistance they need.