



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

## New York "Combat Heroin" Campaign Launched

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO September 23, 2014



### Campaign Features PSAs, Dedicated Website, and Social Media Awareness Efforts

The State has launched a "Combat Heroin" campaign designed to inform and educate New Yorkers about the risks of heroin and prescription opioid use, the signs of addiction, and the resources available to help.

As Vice Co-Chairman of the New York State Senate Heroin and Opioid Addiction Task Force, Senator Mike Nozzolio has been working to raise awareness about this rising epidemic. "The use of highly addictive opioid-based narcotics has destroyed countless lives and families and is the fastest growing drug problem in both our state and nation," said Senator Nozzolio

In 2013, there were close to 90,000 individuals who were admitted for heroin and prescription opioid abuse treatment in New York State alone, an increase from just under 64,000 people in 2004. During this same time period, New Yorkers ages 18 to 24 had the largest increase in such admissions. Nationally, nearly half a million people were reportedly abusing heroin or suffering from heroin dependence in 2012.

"This issue is not an issue that just impacts our inner cities anymore," Senator Nozzolio said. "It's an issue that's pervasive in our suburbs and in our cities, towns and villages."

Earlier this year, the New York State Senate enacted 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 New York State Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction.

A critical element of the legislative package which was enacted into law, requires the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services to develop and implement a public awareness and education campaign. The Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, the New York State Department of Health, and the New York State Office of General Services Media Services Center have worked together to create a multifaceted media campaign which includes a new website that is easy to navigate and is targeted toward parents, adults, and young people who are seeking help and information concerning heroin and opioid abuse and misuse.

The website, which can be found at this link: <http://combatheroin.ny.gov/>, includes information about warning signs of heroin and opioid abuse and misuse, access to Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services treatment providers, and guidance to help parents talk to their children and healthcare professionals talk with their patients.

"As Vice Co-chairman of the Senate Heroin and Opioid Addiction Task Force, I will continue my efforts to raise awareness about this rising epidemic and I am hopeful that law enforcement officials, teachers, parents and concerned community members will use this new website as a tool to help combat this horrific epidemic in our communities," concluded Senator Nozzolio.