



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## SENATOR JEFF KLEIN HOSTS HEROIN TOWN HALL

JEFFREY D. KLEIN September 21, 2016

| ISSUE: **COMBATING HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION, COMMUNITY**



**BRONX, NY** – In response to recent heroin-related deaths in the community, **Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester)** along with **Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj (D-Bronx)**, **Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services Commissioner Arlene Gonzalez-Sanchez**, **Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark**, Bronx Community Board #11, and The Morris Park Community Association hosted a town hall on heroin addiction on Monday at Maestro's Caterers.

Community members learned about treatment and prevention, heard about the recently enacted legislative measures addressing this epidemic, and received Naloxone training All

participants received a Naloxone kit.

“It is devastating that lives were taken from us because of heroin addiction, and tonight’s town hall will help to ensure our community receives the tools and resources they need to help end this epidemic. I am deeply committed to working to combat this scourge. I am proud to say that this year, we created a life-saving package of legislation to get people the help that they need through prevention strategies, better treatment services and overdose reversal medication access,” **said Senator Jeff Klein.**

“It is so important to continue to stay informed on the dangers of drugs and prescription drugs. The battle with addiction is growing and evolving every day. I am thankful for the professionals who joined us tonight to share insight on the epidemic and how to fight it, but as residents to the neighborhood we need to bring this awareness home to our families. We need to educate our young ones to avoid triggers and temptations to avoid getting to the level of despair we are in now,” **said Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj.**

This year the Legislature passed sweeping laws to combat the heroin and opioid epidemic. The life-saving legislative package emphasizes increasing access to treatment, breaking down barriers put up by insurance companies, reducing the number of days initial opioid prescriptions can be written and permitting doctors to administer Naloxone.

Naloxone is a prescription opioid antagonist used in emergency situations to counteract life-threatening depression of the central nervous system and respiratory system. Once administered, an overdose victim can breathe normally.

“It’s good that the community is engaged. Often people don’t want to admit that there is drug abuse going on in their families or their neighborhoods. I implore people to come forward with any information about heroin dealing. My office is strict on the dealer but we

have compassion for the addict,” **said Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark.**

“I want to thank Senator Klein for hosting a Naloxone training and discussion on heroin and prescription opioid addiction in The Bronx. With the Governor and Legislature’s commitment to offer this potentially life-saving training in more areas of the state, we have trained 140,000 New Yorkers resulting in nearly 5,000 administrations. Every Naloxone reversal is an opportunity for an individual to connect with addiction treatment and begin a journey toward recovery. I encourage all New Yorkers to take this training,” **said NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez.**

“I applaud Senator Klein for exemplifying great leadership along with co-sponsors Assemblyman Gjonaj and Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services Commissioner Arlene Gonzalez-Sanchez by calling a Town Hall Heroin Epidemic Information and Naloxone Training for his district. All prior methods operating independently have proven ineffective. Law enforcement, medicine, intensive counseling, school and community-based prevention need to collaborate to bring treatment and prevention services to home communities. If we can break through territorial walls and operate for the single purposed goal of epidemic control I believe we can defeat the menace that threatens to decay our lives from the inside. Government must make a full resources commitment if we are to overcome the No. 1 Health Crisis 20 years in the making,” **said Luke Nasta, M.P.A., CASAC, Executive Director of Camelot of Staten Island, Inc.**

“At the Montefiore Medical Center’s Division of Substance Abuse, we strongly advocate for the broad distribution of opioid overdose prevention kits to arm community residents with tools to prevent fatal overdoses. We also urge people to refer their friends and family members who have overdosed for treatment to assist them in entering into recovery,” **said Sarah Church, Ph.D., Executive Director at the Division of Substance Abuse at Montefiore Medical Center.**