



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Elaine Phillips

## Senator Phillips Hosts Panel Discussion In Mineola On Heroin And Opioid Addiction

ELAINE PHILLIPS July 20, 2017



Mineola - As a member of the New York State Senate Heroin and Opioid Addiction Task Force, Senator Elaine Phillips hosted a panel discussion in Mineola yesterday to discuss the ongoing epidemic of heroin abuse on Long Island and throughout the state.

“The heroin and opioid epidemic is destroying lives. We must continue giving law enforcement and treatment providers stronger tools and additional resources to deal with this crisis,” said Senator Phillips. “While we have made some progress with legislation and

crucial funding, we need forums like this to shed more light on what we can do to address this ongoing public health crisis.”

There has been a dramatic increase in heroin and opioid-based drug use on Long Island with Nassau and Suffolk topping the list of county-wide deaths in New York.

“Heroin and opioid addiction continues to be the highest growing epidemic in our nation. We are losing the battle and communities all across Long Island have stories of the devastation this addiction leaves in its wake. Sadly, everyone knows someone touched by this tragedy.” said Senator Phillips. “Although the names may be different, the stories of those affected by heroin and opioid addiction are all too often the same, and the stories continue at an alarming rate. It is our job as a community to fight the addiction battle alongside those most in need.”

Several members of law enforcement, health care professionals, victims and treatment providers participated in the panel and discussed ways to prevent young people from falling prey to the devastating effects of heroin and other opioid drugs. The panel agreed that education is crucial in the war against addiction.

"The opioid epidemic has reached a critical level on Long Island, yesterday's panel brought to light many issues that need to be addressed immediately. Senator Phillips and her colleagues have the ability to make a difference and showed that yesterday by convening the right group. I think we took a big step in the right direction," said Patrick Ryder, Acting Commissioner, Nassau County Police Department.

“As this crisis continues to ravage Nassau County and every area of New York State we can take some comfort in the continued commitment on the part of the NYS Senate to address local prevention, treatment and recovery needs in a comprehensive way. A special thanks of

course to Senator Elaine Phillips and the entire Long Island delegation to make sure that voices from Long Island are heard and our stories are told,” said Jeffrey Reynolds, President/CEO of the Family & Children’s organization.

Sergeant William Doherty, Floral Park Department said “We can’t arrest ourselves out of the opioid epidemic, but we are continually working on outreach and education programs. As part of new forms of outreach, our department is a registered Opioid Overdose Prevention Program and we are now able to train individuals in the community on how to recognize an overdose, respond and provide narcan.”

In addition to members of the Senate Task Force, Nassau County Police Department, Floral Park Police Department, Nassau County Commissioner of Mental Health, Medical Society of New York State, NYU Winthrop Hospital, Coalition of Medication-Assisted Treatment Providers & Advocates, numerous treatment providers and victims attended.

“Last night we brought together an incredible panel of local individuals from across the heroin and opioid addiction spectrum. It is through continued forums and open dialogue like this that we will be able collaborate and find new and innovative ways to attack this devastating epidemic,” said Senator Phillips. “I am committed to working to improve education, prevention efforts, access to treatment and expanding recovery options right here on Long Island.”

To view the panel in its entirety, click below:

<https://www.nysenate.gov/calendar/events/elaine-phillips/july-19-2017/joint-task-force-heroin-and-opioid-addiction-meeting>