



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Seward Secures State Grant to Fight Cortland County Drug Trade

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR July 26, 2017

| ISSUE: **SENATE TASK FORCE ON HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION, METHAMPHETAMINE, LAW ENFORCEMENT**



**CORTLAND, 07/26/17** – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I/Ref-Oneonta) today announced \$20,000 in state grant funding he secured for the Cortland County Sheriff's Office. The monies will be used to help cover costs associated with drug investigations and enforcement.

**“Our rural police departments are faced with a number of challenges – fighting crime and keeping costs in check – and providing them with the tools to do their job has always been among my top priorities,”**

said Senator Seward. **“Drug crimes have been on the rise and it takes additional resources to fight this deadly epidemic. This \$20,000 state grant will help the sheriff’s office in the fight to keep drugs off the streets, and protect the citizens of Cortland County.”**

Cortland County Sheriff Mark Helms said, “Cortland County has been among the state leaders in meth lab investigations for the past seven years, and the heroin epidemic has also taken a severe toll. Two sheriff’s investigators have been assigned solely to drug investigations, but we are still short of the resources needed. The grant obtained by Senator Seward will be a tremendous support to our department as we work to bring criminals to justice and keep people safe.”

The \$20,000 award secured by Senator Seward was included in a recently adopted state senate resolution and is administered by the state Department of Criminal Justice Services. Senator Seward also noted the need for stronger laws to combat the rise in heroin and opioid sales.

**“As a member of the Senate’s Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, I have worked to combat this deadly epidemic which is destroying lives, families, and communities. This year’s state budget includes \$214 million, a record level of funding, to strengthen prevention, treatment, recovery, and education services across the state. However, we need to do more to stem the flow of these deadly drugs into our communities. Comprehensive laws that target those who profit from the drug trade and prey on the addiction of others will help our law enforcement professionals and lives will be saved.”**

Senator Seward pointed to a package of bills passed by the senate, but not acted on by the state assembly, that would focus on enforcement to hold drug dealers more accountable and improve regulation of synthetic opioids.

Additionally, Senator Seward announced that he will be scheduling a meeting of the Senate’s Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction in Cortland later this year.

**“As we continue to develop state policy related to the heroin epidemic it is vital that we address local concerns. That is why I will be bringing the senate task force to Cortland for a public hearing. This is the best way I know for health experts, law enforcement professionals and those who have dealt personally with the devastation of heroin to tell their stories and influence changes to our laws,”**

Seward concluded.