



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George Amedore

Senate Task Force Pushes for Passage of Law Designed To Prevent Fentanyl-Laced Heroin Deaths

GEORGE AMEDORE September 8, 2017

Following this week's deadly fentanyl laced oxycodone seizure in upstate New York, the State Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, co-Chaired by Senator George Amedore, is urging passage of legislation to amend the public health law that would add new derivatives of fentanyl to the controlled substance schedule. The bill would also increase criminal penalties for the sale of an opiate containing a fentanyl derivative.

"Fentanyl is stronger and deadlier than heroin and as it continues to make its way onto our streets, we see more deaths and overdoses," said Senator George Amedore, co-Chair of the Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction. "The Senate has repeatedly passed measures to add fentanyl to the controlled substance list and to crack down on the dealers who are using this poison to increase their profits. I hope the Assembly and the Governor will get serious and join us in passing these critically important enforcement measures that will finally properly punish these dealers."

"We have a moral obligation to work to prevent the loss of life due to dangerous fentanyl-laced drugs and derivatives," said Senator Fred Akshar. "Families are being ripped apart by opioid addiction across our state, and fentanyl has become a fast-track to overdose deaths. The Assembly must wake up and act immediately to help stem the tide of this epidemic and

give law enforcement the tools they need to get purveyors of this poison off the streets."

Fentanyl is a strong pain medication, that when administered in a medical setting, is often combined with anesthesia to prevent surgery related pain. When improperly used, the effects of fentanyl can lead to serious or life threatening respiratory problems."

"The fentanyl laced drug seizure upstate is hitting way to close to home," said Senator Tom Croci, member of the Senate's Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction and prime sponsor of the legislation. "It is frightening to think the number of lives that could have been lost if the perpetrators would have been successful in getting those pills on the street. As if heroin on its own was not bad enough, we now have fentanyl and its derivatives in the mix taking an even deadlier toll. I am strongly urging Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie to passage of this bill his number one priority when the Legislative session reconvenes in January. I equally urge Governor Cuomo to sign this legislation into law immediately following. Waiting will serve no purpose other than to raise the death toll associated with this dangerous drug."

Numerous reports indicate that fentanyl has a similar euphoric effect to morphine and heroin. However, according to the New York Times, fentanyl is 100 times as powerful as morphine and much deadlier than heroin since it requires more naloxone (a drug used to reverse the effects of an opiate overdose) to counteract life threatening overdoses. The prevalence of fentanyl abuse has been on the rise. Because fentanyl is cheaper than heroin, drug dealers have been mixing fentanyl with heroin in order to produce a cheaper product, which far too often results in a lethal combination.

According to the CDC – National Center for Health Statistics, drug overdoses are expected to remain the leading cause of death for Americans under 50, as synthetic opioids — primarily

fentanyl and its analogues — continue to push the death count higher. Drug deaths involving fentanyl more than doubled from 2015 to 2017, up 540% in 3 years.

Senate Bill S933A during the last legislative session where it passed unanimously by the Senate. The bill, co-sponsored by Assemblyman Al Graf, failed to make it out of the health committee in the New York State Assembly.

###

RELATED LEGISLATION

2017-S933A

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Designates certain substances as schedule I opiates controlled substances

January 05, 2017

In Senate Committee [Rules](#)

Sponsored by [Thomas D. Croci](#)

Do you support this bill?