



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Fred Akshar

## Senate Passes Laree's Law to Hold Drug Dealers Accountable for Overdose Deaths

FRED AKSHAR March 22, 2018

| ISSUE: **COMBATING HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION, HEROIN & OPIOID ADDICTION TASK FORCE**



(ALBANY, NY) This week, the New York State Senate passed “Laree’s Law” to strengthen enforcement and combat growing drug abuse. The bill ([S2761](#)), sponsored by Senator George Amedore (R-C-I, Rotterdam), would allow law enforcement officials to charge a drug dealer with homicide if a death results from the sale of heroin or an opiate controlled substance.

“New York State has established itself as a leader when it comes to increasing prevention and education efforts, making treatment more accessible in every community, and ensuring strong support services for those in recovery. But we need to take on the heroin epidemic from all sides and that includes properly punishing the big business dealers that are bringing this poison into our communities,” said Senator Amedore, Co-Chair of the Senate’s Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction. “They will continue to prey on our most vulnerable until there is a punishment that properly fits the crime.”

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*"We are losing a generation of people and it's time we stood up and did what's right," said Senator Fred Akshar. "We've made record investments in making sure more prevention, education, treatment and recovery services are available, but we must also support the enforcement component in dealing with the scourge of heroin. High-level drug dealers who profit from this epidemic must be held accountable for the lives and families they help destroy."*

Currently, a person who provides an illicit drug that results in the death of a user can typically only be charged with the criminal sale of a controlled substance. As a result, those involved in the illicit drug trade can escape prosecution for the death they caused. Laree’s Law is named in honor of Laree Farrell Lincoln, an Albany County teenager who died of a heroin overdose in 2013 and whose mother, Patty Farrell, has been a strong advocate for holding drug dealers accountable for the true cost of their crimes.

This legislation is intended to target mid- to high-level drug dealers who profit from heroin sales, but does not punish co-users by providing a defense for those who bought and used the opiate with the deceased. New York State’s “Good Samaritan Law,” also shields individuals from charges related to an overdose if they attempt to help the individual and

report the incident in a timely manner.

Laree's Law is part of the Senate's ongoing commitment to combat the heroin and opioid epidemic. In the Senate's budget resolution passed last week, record funding of \$265 million was included and will continue to be a priority in ongoing budget negotiations to help improve prevention, treatment, recovery and education services across the state.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2017-S2761**

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- 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
- 

Establishes the crime of homicide by sale of an opiate controlled substance

January 17, 2017

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **George Amedore**

Do you support this bill?