



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

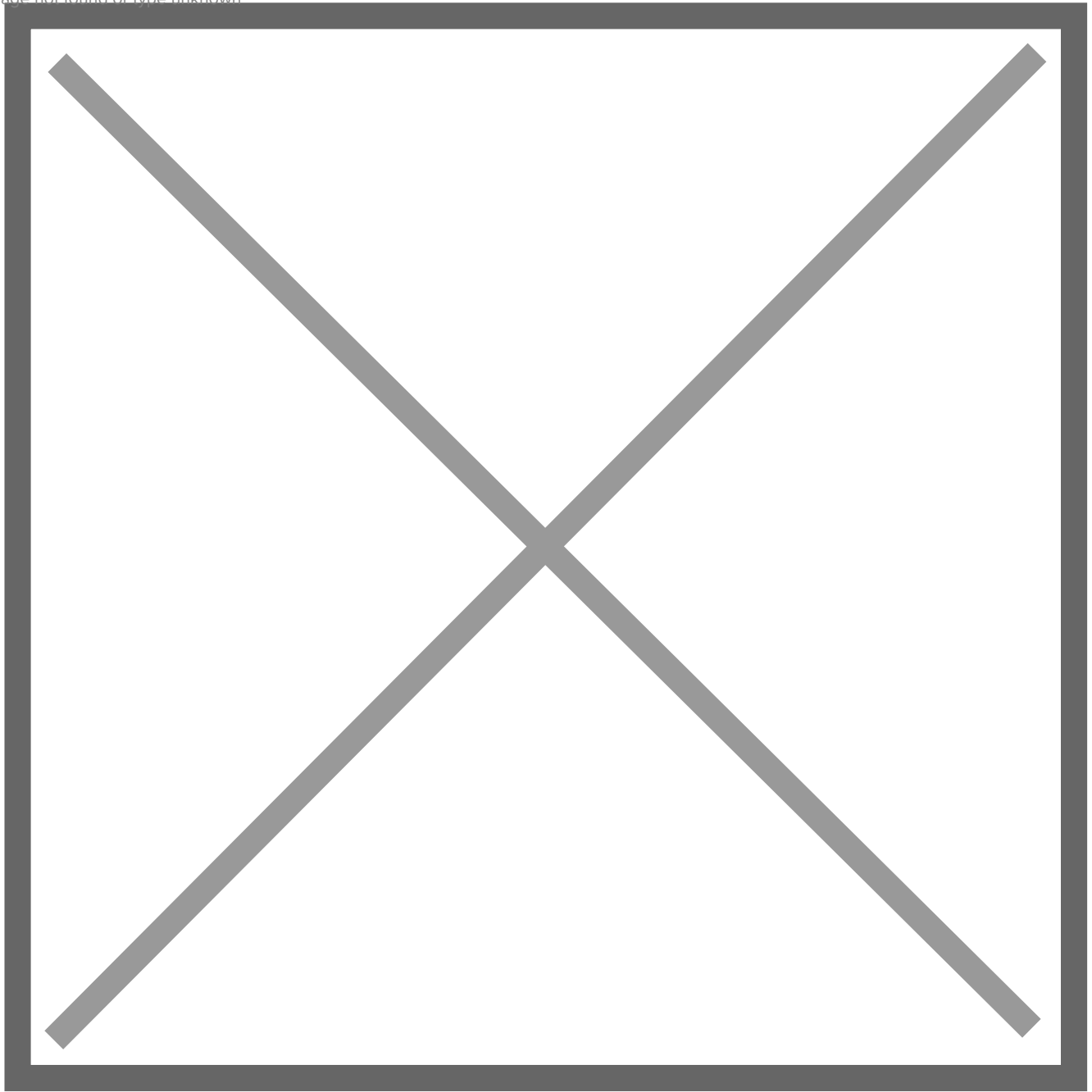
Michael H. Ranzenhofer

## New Funding in the Battle Against Heroin & Opioid Abuse

MICHAEL H. RANZENHOFER June 20, 2018

| ISSUE: **COMBAT HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION**

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Senator Ranzenhofer's column appeared in the Amherst and Clarence Bees on June 20th

The depth and breadth of the heroin and opioid crisis knows no age, geographic or socioeconomic boundaries. It continues to leave devastation and heartache across New York State, including Western New York, in its wake.

As part of the New York Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, I'm helping to lead the effort to find and enact meaningful, lasting answers that can put an end to this epidemic.

As a member of the Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, I helped secure a record level of funding in this year's budget, approximately \$250 million. The budget provides an increase of \$20 million over the Executive Budget and \$37 million over last year's level. This critical funding will help to strengthen prevention, treatment, recovery and education services.

In addition to record funding, I championed an initiative to help address an increase in the number of babies born addicted to opioids. The final budget creates a new program to address this problem by providing \$1 million to further educate and assist doctors and nurses in caring for expectant mothers and new parents with substance abuse disorders. An additional \$350,000 in state funding will be provided to infant recovery centers. This will help to ensure they receive appropriate care.

As your State Senator, I am committed to delivering resources to help our communities combat this public health crisis. The funding in this year's budget to fight the heroin and opioid scourge is crucial to providing families, individuals, law enforcement, health care professionals and mental health experts with the tools and the resources they need to help put an end to this epidemic.

While I am proud to deliver this record funding, it is now time for the Governor and State Assembly to recognize the critical role that stronger drug laws and law enforcement can play in preventing drugs from entering our communities in the first place.

The State Senate has passed a legislative package aimed at stopping drug dealers and others who are profiting from the deadly heroin epidemic.

These bills include stronger penalties for big-time drug dealers selling heroin; as well as for fraudulent medication prescriptions that fuel opioid addictions; measures to protect dealers from preying on children; and legislation that expands the types of dangerous controlled substances that can be regulated by the state.

These measures stem from extensive input received by New York's law enforcement community, health professionals, former addicts, and others who have been impacted by the opioid epidemic.

I am urging the State Assembly and the Governor to stop delaying, act to protect our kids and put dangerous dealers behind bars.