

Senator Rivera's Bill to Decriminalize Syringes Passes the State Senate

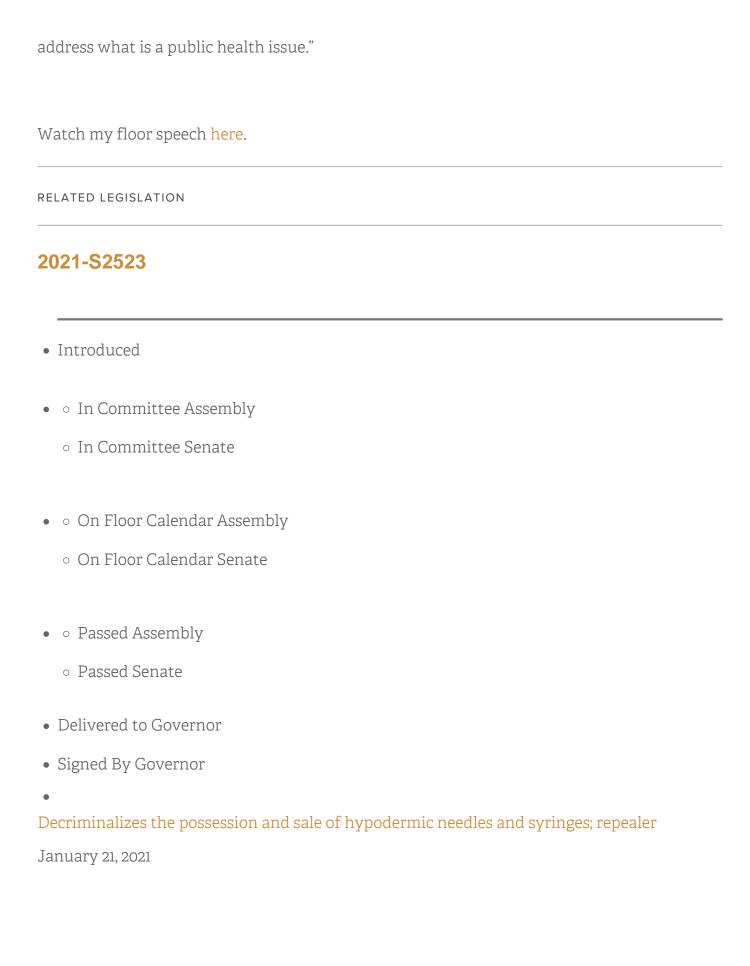
GUSTAVO RIVERA June 7, 2021

ISSUE: SYRINGES, DECRIMINALIZATION, BATTLING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

(Albany) - Today, State Senator Gustavo Rivera released the following statement after his bill (S.2523) to decriminalize the possession and sale of hypodermic needles and syringes passed the State Senate.

"Policing and criminalization will not end our State's substance use crisis. I am proud that the Senate Majority passed my bill to decriminalize the possession and sale of hypodermic needles and syringes. Syringe access programs are proven public health initiatives that help to reduce the rate of HIV and hepatitis transmissions and connect those in need to harm reduction services.

While syringe access programs have been successfully operating in New York State for decades, syringe possession was never removed from our State's penal code. This unfortunate legal ambiguity has deterred countless New Yorkers struggling with substance use from accessing harm reduction services or resulted in the unnecessary incarceration of New Yorkers participating in the program. My bill will make a simple yet critical change that ends this vicious cycle and stops the counterproductive use of law enforcement resources to



Signed by Governor

Sponsored by Gustavo Rivera

Do you support this bill?