



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## 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

address what is a public health issue.”

Watch my floor speech [here](#).

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2021-S2523

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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
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[Decriminalizes the possession and sale of hypodermic needles and syringes; repealer](#)

January 21, 2021

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Gustavo Rivera**

Do you support this bill?