



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

## Five New Harckham Opioid / SUD Bills Passed in Senate Part of a Productive Session

PETE HARCKHAM May 25, 2022

| ISSUE: **SENATOR HARCKHAM. SD40, BATTLING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC, ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE COMMITTEE, SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT**



*Albany, NY* – New York State Senator Pete Harckham and his colleagues in the Senate approved today five bills he had introduced to remove barriers to treatment for substance use disorder (SUD), improve access to lifesaving programs and ensure best practices in the delivery of recovery services. The bills were part of a “Combat the Opioid Crisis and Improve Treatment Programs” package of legislation, all of which were approved first in the Senate Committee on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, which Harckham chairs.

The Senate passage of Harckham's legislation today is part of an exceptionally productive 2021-2022 session by the lawmaker that included his introducing 54 separate substance use disorder / overdose prevention bills, 11 that were approved by the Senate and five that were signed into law.

“Over the past two-plus years New York residents have been facing an epidemic of opioid overdoses within a pandemic, an alarming crisis that warranted an all-out effort to save lives,” said Harckham. “The legislation I have introduced reflects the many ways we can improve and widen treatment programs and services for those who need them. With the resources that are available statewide, New York should lead the way in safeguarding those with substance use disorder and co-occurring behavioral health issues.”

One of Harckham's bills that the Senate just passed will help New Yorkers in need gain access to potentially lifesaving services. The bill ([S.5690](#)) eliminates daily co-pays for visits to Opioid Treatment programs. Often residents in such programs need to continue treatment past the 90-day window of private insurance plans, and faced with prohibitive co-pay costs end up dropping out of their programs. Another bill, [S.4486B](#), will establish protections to SUD treatment providers from certain Office of Medicaid Inspector General (OMIG) audits, some of which have caused providers to go out of business, leaving patients without lifesaving programs. Both bills have been passed in the Assembly.

The three other bills of Harckham's passed today, which are in Assembly committees and poised for full approval in the Legislature, are:

[S.6319A](#): Helps create a career advancement pathway for substance use disorder professionals by having the state Office of Addiction Supports and Services (OASAS) establish clear requirements for each professional title and education to advance. This will encourage professionals to remain in the field long-term and continue with education, resulting in a more secure workforce.

[S.6746A](#): Requires treatment providers with chemical dependence services to offer access to buprenorphine to residents with SUD. Administering buprenorphine is regarded to be the gold standard of harm reduction in opioid treatment programs.

[S.7910](#): Creates a reimbursement rate for existing SUD treatment facilities that offer peer services and transportation to programs. Supporting alternative treatment locations with peer services supports individuals currently in those programs and increases peer treatment retention rates.

Allegra Schorr, President of the Coalition of Medication-Assisted Treatment Providers and Advocates (COMPA), stated: “COMPA applauds the New York State Senate for passing these critical bills to combat the opioid crisis. This legislative package includes provisions to ensure access to medication-assisted treatment and naloxone, as well as due process protections for health care providers and recipients.

We commend New York State Senate and Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Committee Chair Senator Pete Harckham for his leadership and the bills’ sponsors for all of the important legislation in this comprehensive package. Overdose deaths continued to reach record highs last year. These measures are urgently needed to stem the tide.”

Amy Dorin, President and CEO of the Coalition for Behavioral Health, said, “As the opioid epidemic continues to worsen, the New York State Senate took bold action today to save lives by passing a package of bills to prevent overdose and increase access to care. The Coalition commends the Senate for moving these bills forward.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2021-S5690**

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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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Relates to prohibiting co-payments for treatment at an opioid treatment program

March 16, 2021

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Pete Harckham**

Do you support this bill?