

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



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Senator Helming: Senate Passes Bills to Fight Heroin Crisis

GENEVA – Senator Pam Helming today announced that the New York State Senate recently passed a number of measures, all of which she co-sponsors, to put a focus on the heroin crisis by preventing drug dealers from profiting from this deadly epidemic. The legislation includes stronger penalties for drug dealers who sell heroin and fraudulent medication prescriptions, protections for children who are preyed upon by dealers, and expansion of the types of controlled substances regulated by New York State.

“More than 100 Americans die from heroin and opioid overdose every day – a rate that is higher than car crashes, gun violence, and even the HIV/AIDS epidemic at its peak. The heroin crisis has impacted every community that I represent, and even one death is one too many. Sadly, we all know someone who has been affected by this devastating epidemic that reaches every demographic group regardless of age, gender, race, or socioeconomic status, and not one week passes where we don’t hear of another drug-related overdose or death. While there are no easy answers or quick fixes, I am committed more than ever to working with my colleagues, our community partners, and law enforcement to come up with real solutions. This legislation we passed will make it easier to punish drug dealers and protect our children from becoming another statistic. I was proud to join my colleagues in supporting this legislation,” Senator Helming said.

Senator Helming and her colleagues crafted this legislation after extensive input from people with a variety of perspectives on the epidemic, including law enforcement, emergency services, medicine, public health, treatment and prevention, public education, and parent advocacy. As a member of the Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, Senator Helming has taken part in several hearings, forums, and meetings related to the crisis and hosted her own “Addressing the Heroin & Opioid Addiction Crisis” roundtable discussion in Seneca Falls in November.

The bills contain measures that would:

- consider the possession of 50 or more packages of heroin with a total value of \$300 as possession with intent to sell (S.638);
- take into account heroin’s lighter weight to create appropriate penalties (S.880);
- make it a crime to sell a controlled substance on the grounds of or within 1,000 feet of drug and alcohol treatment centers (S.1127);

- make it a crime to fraudulently prescribe, dispense, and obtain and unlawfully possess non-controlled substances and devices (S.2814);
- make a felony for an adult to sell a controlled substance to a minor under the age of 14 (S.3845);
- and stiffens penalties for selling Carfentanil, a synthetic opioid that is 100 times deadlier than fentanyl and 10,000 times stronger than morphine (S.623), and Alpha-PVP, a designer drug that is similar to bath salts and methamphetamine and has been known to cause violent behavior (S.816).

This legislation complements a record \$247 million in this year's New York State budget – \$20 million more than the Executive Budget proposal and \$37 million more than last year's budget – for prevention, treatment, and recovery.

Senator Helming represents the 54th Senate District, which consists of Seneca and Wayne Counties, parts of Cayuga and Ontario Counties, and the towns of Lansing and Webster. For more information, please visit Senator Helming's [website](#), or follow @SenatorHelming on Facebook or Twitter.

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