



New Hampshire General Court

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Joint Task Force recommends several bills on substance abuse be expedited

Concord, NH – The full Joint Task Force on the response to the heroin and opioid epidemic met today to make recommendations to fast track legislation this January as part of an interim report.

Senator Jeb Bradley (R-Wolfeboro), task force chairman, and Representative Dick Hinch (R-Merrimack), vice chair, issued the following statements.

“Today’s work by the full Task Force concluded with the recommendation of three bills aimed at curbing the heroin and opioid abuse crisis in New Hampshire to be expedited. These bills will be heard in a joint public hearing of the House and Senate with the final legislation expected to be on the Governor’s desk in January,” said Senator Jeb Bradley (R-Wolfeboro).

“The Joint Task Force was successful in vetting and refining substance abuse legislation and I applaud the commitment shown by all of the legislators who participated in the rigorous process of ensuring that the very best legislation, free of unintended consequences, is put forth to curtail the substance abuse epidemic in our state,” added Bradley.

“What the Task Force has done over the last month is find avenues to move our fight against addiction forward, and move us forward faster. Our goal remains to get our fast-tracked proposals to the Governor by the end of January. In addition, we’ve identified a number of initiatives that show promise that we’ll work on through coming months,” Representative Richard Hinch (R-Merrimack).

“This is an evolving crisis and this Task Force was never intended to be a one-shot solution. The Task Force has been our focused course of action to create the best possible recommendations to move us forward, given what we know at this time. The full legislature still needs to act on these proposals and we will work on building consensus to ensure we meet our goals for action in January.”

“Our work doesn’t stop once the Task Force report is filed. We will take action as appropriate and move forward on other initiatives as our legislative session plays out in 2016,” said Hinch.

BACKGROUND

Expedited legislation:

- Increasing penalties for distributing fentanyl to match those for heroin, Eliminating insurer's prior authorization requirements so individuals seeking substance abuse treatment can obtain it without delay, and Stronger requirements for providers to use the prescription drug monitoring system (LSR 2758)
- Studying expanded distribution of Narcan (LSR 2955)
- Expanding alcohol and drug education in schools (LSR 2879)

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