



New Hampshire General Court

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Bipartisan Senate, House leaders encourage strong, united support of drug interdiction bill

Legislators to vote on granite hammer program in session tomorrow

Concord, NH – Today, House and Senate leaders, from both parties, came together to urge focused, unified support of increasing drug interdiction measures in cities and towns across New Hampshire.

“In the middle of the heroin and opioid crisis affecting our communities statewide, I look forward to making the most out of the opportunity we have been given to pass legislation to continue the Granite Hammer program that has successfully taken drug traffickers off of our streets. I strongly urge all legislators to set aside politics and do what’s right for the state by voting to pass this measure tomorrow which previously passed both bodies,” said Senate Majority Leader Jeb Bradley (R-Wolfeboro)

“The Granite Hammer program began in Manchester and after only eight operations in the state’s largest city, police seized nearly 25,000 doses of heroin and made 94 arrests. The program has truly had a positive effect of eradicating drug dealers and lessening the supply of heroin in our communities, but the funds have run out to continue these efforts unless we act. Now is the time to make the responsible choice to do what is right for the state of New Hampshire and provide the resources to continue or expand drug interdiction efforts in our cities and towns. I urge full support of a clean bill tomorrow, without any additional amendments,” added Bradley.

“We are facing an unprecedented crisis in New Hampshire that is claiming lives on a daily basis. The law enforcement community has demonstrated an urgent and compelling need for this grant program, in order to continue operations that take drugs off the streets and put dealers and traffickers behind bars. The grants will be available to any law enforcement agency who demonstrates that their budgets are being strained by the volume of drug activity requiring enhanced investigations and operations. Evidence and data presented to the legislature suggests that recent operations are highly effective, taking tens of thousands of deadly addictive doses of opiates off the streets,” said House Majority Leader Dick Hinch (R-Merrimack)

“The action by the legislature may have been unplanned, but we are acting within our rules, following precedent set by numerous legislatures before us, and fulfilling our duty to act on this important matter affecting every community in New Hampshire. It’s time to take our streets back from drug dealers, and this legislation helps us achieve that goal,” said Hinch.

“Combating the heroin and opioid crisis requires us to work together and put aside political games,” said Senate Democratic Leader Jeff Woodburn (D-Dalton). “All year long, we have worked together on a comprehensive, bipartisan plan to combat this crisis ravaging communities and I am thankful that we are again coming together across party lines to take action on the Granite Hammer legislation, something that was originally proposed in Governor Hassan’s legislative package last fall. It is critical that we provide additional resources for our state and local law enforcement, who are battling this crisis on the front lines. I and my Democratic colleagues look forward to supporting a clean version of the Granite Hammer legislation tomorrow and getting it to the Governor’s desk as soon as possible so that we can do what’s best for our communities and the people of New Hampshire.”

House Minority Leader Steve Shurtleff (D-Concord) said that it was time to put partisan politics aside on this issue, “There is no question that people are dying from drug overdose every day on the streets of our state. This legislation is extremely important in our fight to keep opioids off the street and out of the hands of drug dealers. This is not a precedence setting vote by any means and the sooner we suspend the rules and pass this legislation, the better for our law enforcement community in their fight against drug dealers who prey upon those from all walks of life who are fighting drug addiction.”

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