

Please pass the current legislation, House Bill 231.

It cannot be disputed that opiate pain medications are among the most deadly substances known to man. More Americans have been lost to the epidemic than the country's last 4 wars combined. And, the carnage continues.... Daily....

Unsuspecting citizens are trusting pharmaceutical companies and doctors to "do what is best".

Parents do not understand the risks. In our own Kings school district, an affluent area with intensely caring parents, the risk factor for young people getting on heroin is whether a sick parent or grandparent is in the household. Pilfering is how my own children were introduced. Almost 10 of the graduating class of 2007 (about 5%) are dead from overdoses. Many more are deeply damaged.

The medication to treat illness has become the illness.

The packaging warning labels for cigarettes and alcohol are more restrictive than these drugs. People under the age of 18 can pick up the prescriptions of other family members.

The legislation does not go far enough, but it is a first step. At least, the unenlightened may question, and pilfering can be reduced.

Additional legislation is needed.

The AG's of 46 states, 5 territories and the District of Columbia sued the tobacco industry and in 1998 negotiated a \$206 billion settlement. It is time for our state AG's to initiate the legal process to sue the responsible pharmaceutical companies who created the crisis we now face. Any settlement may include a non-negotiable requirement that any and all monies be devoted to addiction and related mental health treatment, a burden currently being carried by families and taxpayers.

There are many other costs directly related. Other health problems, crime, Medicaid, Disability are only some of them. The courts and prison system are overloaded.