

# News from John McDonald



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## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

### *Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Program*

I am pleased to see Governor Cuomo include the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Program as a priority in the coming year. I believe our cities would benefit from it greatly.

Let's face it, the downtowns of yesterday may not get back to their heyday as it was, but resources like this allow cities to redefine themselves in the new economy. This program is critical in this era of online sales.

Read the full press release from the Governor's office [here](http://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-unveils-third-proposal-2018-state-state-round-three-downtown-revitalization).  
(<http://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-unveils-third-proposal-2018-state-state-round-three-downtown-revitalization>)

### *Laree's Law*

**This Times Union** (<http://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Lethal-heroin-deal-leads-to-prison-for-Saratoga-12413074.php#photo-14666384>) story by Steve Hughes discusses an item I have supported in the Assembly that the Federal Government can carry out - holding drug dealers accountable for their actions. Especially when it comes to deaths related to illegal drugs.

The Federal government has the ability to and has prosecuted successfully individuals whose actions in the illegal drug trade have led to tragic deaths. I remain committed to Laree's Law here in New York State. We have to address the opioid/heroin epidemic on all fronts: Education, Enforcement, Treatment and Recovery.

### *REDC Grants Helping the 108<sup>th</sup> District*

**This article** (<http://www.timesunion.com/news/article/State-awards-will-boost-Troy-Cohoes-historic-12431435.php>) from Kenneth Crowe of the Times Union speaks to additional grants awarded yesterday by Governor Cuomo and the REDC that will benefit the 108th Assembly District.

Funding will be used to support the Burden Iron Museum in Troy which has a treasure trove of stories to tell. Funding is also provided to the Erie Canalway Heritage Area to support efforts to bring back to life the Matton Shipyard in Cohoes.

History is alive again!

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## DISTRICT NEWS

### *CDTA Navigator*

CDTA's Navigator fare collection system will be officially up and running at the beginning of 2018.

The last day to purchase Swipers and other paper-based passes is **December 31, 2017**. This includes the onboard sale of Day Passes and Change Cards. On January 1, 2018 Customers will need to purchase fare products on a Navigator smartcard or the mobile ticket application. Customers will no longer be able to purchase Day Passes and Change Cards on the bus.

CDTA will continue to accept existing paper-based passes (including monthly swipers, 10-trips, 3-day passes and change cards) until March 31, 2018. On April 1, 2018 no paper-based passes will be accepted.

For more information on the new Navigator card visit <https://www.cdta.org/navigator-faq> (<https://www.cdta.org/navigator-faq>)

### *Smith's Restaurant to Re-Open After Fire Damage*

Good news for Cohoes as another business impacted by the November 30th fire is [close to being opened](https://www.cdta.org/navigator-faq). (<https://www.cdta.org/navigator-faq>)

Looking forward to Smith's Restaurant being back in business next Monday December 18th!

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## **IN THE NEWS**

### *Prescription Drug Prices*

**This NY Times article** (<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/09/health/drug-prices-generics-insurance.html?rref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Fhealth&action=click&contentCollection=health&region=rank&module=package&version=highlights&contentPlacement=1&pgtype=sectionfront>) discusses a much more common occurrence as the complexity of prescription plan design continues. Many times, when filling prescriptions, we can offer patients a lower price for what is prescribed. However, contracts with the prescription benefit manager do not allow us to offer that option for fear of being excluded from the

contract.

There is a reason behind the pricing methodology which is more of an actuarial science. At the end of the day that does not help individuals' access prescription medication.

Look for more action at the state level on this to come. Pharmacists are in a great position to provide the right medication at the right price for the right patient working with the patients prescriber.