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August 25, 2021

Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
Capitol Building, Executive Chamber
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

I am writing to request emergency action on the “Death by Dealer” bill (A.6314) that has been stalled in the Legislature since 2015 when it was first proposed by Nassau District Attorney Madeline Singas in response to a wave of overdose deaths that swept the state. With yet another upsurge of deaths this month from cocaine laced with fentanyl, our immediate action on this bill will save lives.

We need to send a clear and unequivocal message that if you sell deadly narcotics in our communities, you will be charged with murder if your actions lead to the death of the user. With fentanyl flooding into our country, illicit drug use has become a lethal pursuit and, tragically, is killing our families, friends and neighbors.

This tragedy could have been avoided if we had taken action in 2015 when District Attorney Singas—now a court of appeals judge—first proposed the measure. Or again in 2018 when the legislation was called Laree’s Law after Albany County teenager Laree Farrell-Lincoln, who died of a heroin overdose. Or maybe we should name it after Chance Bentley, whose mother pleaded with us in January, “Help, our children are dying.”

Last week, nine people overdosed on fentanyl-laced drugs in my district, and six of them died. Maybe if the Legislature took action in 2015 or 2018 or earlier this year, these deaths could have been prevented. How many more people need to die before we get serious with the war on drugs?

I am requesting that this bill be addressed immediately on an emergency basis by both houses of the Legislature and its respective committees. I, along with many of my colleagues, parents and law enforcement, consider it a matter of life and death.

As we have seen, every day that passes brings another fatality by illegal drug overdose. We must take action now to protect our residents from the scourge of deadly drugs and the murderous individuals who peddle them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jodi Giglio".

Jodi Giglio, Assemblywoman
Second District

Cc: Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins