

# The Connecticut General Assembly



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## REP. LINEHAN AND SEN. ANWAR, CO-CHAIRS OF CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE, TO RAISE LEGISLATION ADDRESSING ADOLESCENT DRUG USE IN RESPONSE TO FENTANYL OVERDOSE INCIDENTS

(Hartford, CT) – **State Representative Liz Linehan (D-Cheshire, Southington, Wallingford)** and **Senator Saud Anwar (D-East Hartford, Ellington, East Windsor, South Windsor)**, Co-Chairs of the Committee on Children, will introduce two critical pieces of legislation in the upcoming legislative session in response to the growing issue of drug use among adolescents. Over the past three weeks, two Connecticut teenagers have suffered fentanyl related overdose tragedies while in school.

The first piece of legislation proposes funding for schools, youth agencies, and local health districts to obtain the resources to treat drug overdoses, such as Narcan, and to train staff in detecting and responding to the early signs of drug use. This legislation will require any entity obtaining supplies to train staff in the A-SBIRT program, which is an evidence-based program to help adults recognize drug use in adolescents, provide a brief intervention, and refer a child and their family to treatment. The initiative will be completely funded for a two-year period and would not be mandated on schools.

This bill will be co-introduced by Rep. Linehan, Sen. Anwar, House Speaker Ritter, Rep. Allie-Brennan, Rep. Arnone, Rep. Borer, Rep. Chafee, Rep. Comey, Rep. Concepcion, Rep. Conley, Rep. Dathan, Rep. Michel, Rep. Hall, Rep. Porter, Rep. Doucettee, Rep. Elliott, Rep. Farrar, Rep. Foster, Rep. Gonzalez, Rep. Genga, Rep. Gilchrest, Rep. Goupil, Rep. Gucker, Rep. Hampton, Rep. Horn, Rep. Hughes, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Luxenberg, Rep. Morrin-Bello, Rep. Nolan, Rep. Paris, Rep. Parker, Rep. Quinn, Rep. Reyes, Rep. Ryan, Rep. Scanlon, Rep. Brian Smith, Rep. Franklin J. Smith, Rep. Tercyak, Rep. Turco, Rep. Winkler, Rep. Welander and Rep. Young.

"The bill will be a train-the-trainer model which will ultimately imbed trainers around the state who can then continue to train others, making it the most cost efficient and long-term way to introduce training programs that support children," said **Rep. Linehan**. "It's important that we not only supply our schools and youth organizations with the tools to treat drug overdoses, but with the proposer staffing and training to recognize drug use in its early stages and support young people before things worsen."

"Our state keeps experiencing tragedies in schools where children overdose on fentanyl and related drugs. This is unacceptable and must change. By putting common-sense policies in place, namely better training to discover, respond to and detect drug overdoses and requiring safe storage of drugs, as well as increasing access to lifesaving resources like Narcan, we can continue to reorient our efforts toward prevention to protect our youth against the ever-present scourge of the opioid crisis," said **Sen. Anwar**.

The second piece of legislation would require safe storage information be provided with every opioid and THC prescription. The Department of Consumer Protections, Department of Public Health and the Department of Children and Families would be responsible for supplying this information and creating the informative handout.

Nearly one third of Connecticut high school students misusing pain medications were given them or took them from their home or someone else's home, according to a 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System study.

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