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PRESS RELEASE

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D.A. McMahon Announces Launch of “Staten Islanders Against Drug Abuse” Public Awareness Campaign to Combat the Borough’s Heroin, Fentanyl, and Opioid Epidemic

SIHOPE Initiative includes online resources for those battling addiction, grassroots public awareness campaign

Staten Island, N.Y. – Richmond County District Attorney Michael E. McMahon today announced the launch of “Staten Islanders Against Drug Abuse,” a grassroots public awareness campaign aimed at combating the heroin, fentanyl and opioid epidemic in Staten Island while also providing resources and help to those battling addiction.

The initiative includes a new, one-stop shop website, SIHOPE.org. This online resource was designed for those struggling with addiction, those with a loved one struggling with substance abuse, and those that simply want to get involved to help stop the heroin and opioid epidemic in Staten Island.

Additionally, as part of this campaign, the SIHOPE team is also encouraging Staten Island residents to join the fight against drug abuse by distributing 25,000 pieces of literature and placing over 5,000 yard signs throughout the borough at homes, businesses, and busy street corners. This month, our team began knocking on doors and calling business owners across the Island to put up signs to show their support.

DA McMahon made the announcement today with Borough President James Oddo, NYPD Borough Commander Chief Edward Delatorre and leaders in the borough’s government and substance abuse treatment and counseling.

“For far too long, we have all heard that when addiction came to a family’s door, they did not know where to turn. We believe that SIHOPE.org will help solve that problem,” said District Attorney Michael E. McMahon. “This grassroots public awareness campaign is taking the fight against Staten Island’s drug epidemic to the streets. We are saying loud and clear: Staten Island is standing up against drug abuse and together we will put an end to this scourge.”

SIHOPE.org features simple and straightforward information on what resources are available and how to access help and services, how to speak with your loved one who may have a drug problem, how to report

drug activity in your neighborhood directly to the Richmond County District Attorney's Office, and much more.

To get involved by displaying a yard sign at your home or business, or to volunteer, please visit SIHOPE.org and click the "I Want to Help" tab. We have also launched Twitter & Instagram accounts for the SIHOPE.org campaign (@SIHOPECampaign).

City Council Minority Leader Steven Matteo said, "As I have said before, we must take an all-hands-on-deck approach to the fight against the opioid epidemic if we are to be successful. Along with the multi-agency HOPE initiative, this communications campaign gives us another tool to help us stop the downward spiral of addiction before it becomes fatal."

Council Member Joseph Borelli said, "In the age of likes, follows, and hashtags, we would be naïve to deny the power of social media and the internet, which is why the SIHOPE campaign has so much potential to turn the tide in our community's battle against addiction. I am proud to support this public awareness campaign which connects those struggling with substance addiction to a network of public and private resources, and I thank District Attorney McMahan for leading this endeavor."

State Senator Diane Savino said, "I am proud to stand with District Attorney McMahan and our community partners during the launch of the SIHOPE sign and literature campaign. I have heard first hand accounts of this sweeping epidemic during the State's budget hearings. Although we know far too well the harsh realities of the opioid crisis here on Staten Island, I am confident that with the unwavering commitment of all the partners in our community leading the way, we will win this fight"

Assemblyman Michael Cusick said, "The heroin and opioid epidemic has faced a multipronged approach from legislators, treatment professionals, and law enforcement who have all pushed to improve information-sharing and transparency. Providing individuals and families struggling for help with a centralized, accessible means of utilizing that information is another essential step forward in the fight. I'm pleased to hear of the grassroots campaign efforts by DA McMahan that will alert those who battle addiction and are seeking help to visit SIHope.org."

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