

Beiser Supports Measure to Decrease Addiction to Opioids, Heroin

by Illinois House of Representatives
April 17 2015 10:58 AM

With heroin abuse in local communities at epidemic levels, State Rep.



, D-Alton, is sponsoring legislation to increase the availability of abuse-deterrent prescription painkillers.

“Law enforcement, elected officials and community members across the nation have been shocked by the skyrocketing increase in opiate-related deaths,” Beiser said.

“Abuse-deterrent drugs significantly reduce the chances patients become addicted to prescriptions and we need to do everything we can to promote their use as safe alternatives.”

Opioid-based prescription painkillers, such as codeine, morphine and oxycodone, are often the first drugs people become addicted to before switching to heroin, which is

cheaper and more dangerous. To reduce addiction to these medications, drug companies have developed painkillers with abuse-deterrent properties, which drastically reduce the addictive properties of opiates by making it harder to crush the pill into a powder that abusers then snort or mix with water to inject. Beiser is sponsoring a measure requiring health insurance companies to cover prescriptions for these new medications.

Since 2011, Madison County has seen at least 20 heroin related deaths each year. According to the Madison County Coroner's Office there were nearly 100 overdose deaths last year, more than half of which were the result of opioid and heroin abuse.

“This measure helps us get to the root of the problem,” Beiser added. “There are ongoing discussions about how lawmakers can address these enormous challenges in our communities and this is an important step in that process.”

House Bill 2743 is currently waiting for a vote in the House of Representatives.