

## Fact Sheet on S-823 and S-494

- The studies on existing programs are conflicting at best, with many indicating an increase in discarded needles in spite of disposal precautions.
- The legislation provides no mandatory counseling or treatment for addicts.
- There is a mere \$10M appropriation for drug treatment in the legislation (a one-time only amount).
- There is concern that addicts will be given a “free pass” through drug-free school zones in order to exchange needles at established locations?
- The vast majority of law enforcement officials oppose needle exchange programs because they are a magnet for drug dealers.
- In other cities where such programs have been tried (such as Baltimore), informal “drug supermarkets” appear in proximity to the exchange sites.
- Exchange programs will occur in neighborhoods where residents have already taken great strides to remove dealers from the area. Thus, the product will follow the consumer, and dealers will return to sell their products to those wishing to exchange needles.
- The age limit for obtaining needles is eighteen (18). Many eighteen-year-olds are still in high school, and thus they could have access to needles which they could pass on to other members of the high school community.
- While the decriminalization of the sale of needles is needed for some individuals such as diabetics, no one wishes to see a local pharmacy populated by those wishing to receive needles for illegal drug activity.
- While the program has been modified to permit only six cities to have such needle exchange programs, residents of other parts of New Jersey should be concerned about the quality of life issues involved in this legislation for residents of those cities.