



U.S. Senate Approves Legislation with Feinstein-Talent Anti-Meth Amendment
Legislation Would Limit Purchases of Products Containing Meth's Primary Ingredient
September 15, 2005

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) The U.S. Senate today passed a key Appropriations bill that includes sweeping anti-meth legislation sponsored by U.S. Senators Jim Talent (R-Mo.) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif) to limit access to cold medicines containing pseudoephedrine, the primary ingredient used to make meth. The Senate approved the Talent-Feinstein legislation as an amendment to the Commerce, Justice and Science Appropriations bill last Friday.

The Talent-Feinstein legislation would move cold medicines containing pseudoephedrine behind the pharmacy counter and limit how much one person can buy to 7.5 grams a month. It is modeled after the successful Oklahoma law that resulted in an immediate 80 percent drop in meth labs seized. The comprehensive bill also authorizes \$43 million in new anti-meth funding for law enforcement, training and treatment.

“This is another big step forward in the effort to help people who are threatened by meth,” said Sen. Talent. “Our bill would strengthen anti-meth laws passed in other states and would establish the gold standard in the country to restrict the sale of products with pseudoephedrine so we can finally get ahead of the meth cooks. Now we need to get the bill approved by the House and Senate Conference and Sen. Feinstein and I will be working very hard to get that done as quickly as possible.”

“We've cleared one more hurdle in the effort to pass the toughest anti-meth bill this nation has ever seen,” said Sen. Feinstein. “Put simply, this bill will dry up the supply of pseudoephedrine for meth cooks across the country.

“It moves cold medicine with pseudoephedrine behind the counter and establishes a strong national standard for how much of the drug can be purchased in a month. At the same time, it gives States the flexibility to enact even tougher laws. It will make a major difference in preventing cold medications from being used to cook meth. I look forward to working with Senator Talent to seeing that this provision remains in conference and is signed into law.”

“This is a tremendous victory for law enforcement in its fight against the methamphetamine epidemic,” said Fraternal Order of Police National President Chuck Canterbury. “The F.O.P. is grateful for the leadership of Senators Talent and Feinstein on this important legislation, and we will continue to work with them to ensure that our nation's law enforcement officers have the tools they need to counter the threat which this deadly drug poses to our children and to our communities.”

The bill:

- Moves cold medicines containing pseudoephedrine behind the counter – amends the Controlled Substances Act to appropriately limit the sale of medicines containing pseudoephedrine by placing them behind the counter and sets a limit on how much of such medicines one person can buy in a month – 7.5 grams.
- Requires signature and identification for purchases – The Attorney General will develop regulations to ensure uniformity.
- Creates alternate procedures for stores without pharmacies and stores in rural areas – The Drug Enforcement Administration and States will be able to develop additional procedures to continue to allow cold medicine to be sold at retail stores without pharmacies and in rural areas (but which meet appropriate security criteria), consistent with the intent of the bill to limit access to pseudoephedrine.
- Establishes a uniform federal standard that strengthens all existing state laws.
- Creates a national Meth treatment center – to research effective treatments for Meth abuse.
- Authorizes \$43 million for enforcement, training, and research into treatment. This includes:
 - \$25,000,000 for local law enforcement and federal prosecutors to bring meth manufacturers and dealers to justice
 - \$13,000,000 for meth treatment and research
 - \$5,000,000 to help children who have been affected by meth

The Commerce, Justice and Science Appropriations bill, which passed the Senate today, was approved earlier by the House without the anti-meth amendment. Now the bill must be approved by a House and Senate Conference Committee before it can be signed into law.

Background

Methamphetamine is perhaps the most deadly, fiercely addictive and rapidly spreading drug the United States has known. During the past decade, while law enforcement officers continue to bust record numbers of clandestine labs, meth use in communities has increased by as much as 300%. Meth is cheap, potent, and available everywhere.

The continuing proliferation of methamphetamine production continues to put a severe strain on federal and local law enforcement resources. Fighting meth requires a comprehensive approach designed to assist states, local law enforcement and prosecutors to crack down on cooks and traffickers of meth while enhancing community education and awareness and treatment options for those addicted to this dangerous drug.

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