



Talent and Feinstein Unveil Strengthened Anti-Meth Bill

- Bill to limit access to cold medicine containing a key ingredient to make Meth garners support from law enforcement, major retailers, and consumers -

June 28, 2005

Washington, DC –U.S. Senators Jim Talent (R-Mo.) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today announced broad new support for a strengthened bill that would limit access to cold medicines containing pseudoephedrine, the primary ingredient used to make methamphetamine.

On Thursday, the Senate Judiciary Committee is expected to consider the legislation, which is modeled after the successful Oklahoma law that resulted in an immediate 80 percent drop in meth labs seized.

“There has been a tremendous shift in momentum for this legislation since Senator Feinstein and I first introduced it,” Senator Talent said. **“We have always had the strong support of law enforcement, and now we are joined by a diverse group of industry leaders, including major retailers, some of whom since the introduction of our bill, have taken voluntarily steps to move products with pseudoephedrine behind the counter. Our enhanced legislation would enact the toughest standard in the country to cut off the meth cooks from the ingredient they need to make this deadly drug. By keeping products with pseudoephedrine behind the counter, we can keep methamphetamines out of our neighborhoods and schools.”**

“Meth is the worst drug I have ever seen – in terms of its scope, its affects on users, and its affect on the environment,” Senator Feinstein said. **“The epidemic only continues to deepen. Meth lab seizures across the nation, for instance, have doubled in the past five years – from 7,438 in 1999 to 15,994 in 2004. But the Oklahoma model offers a ray of hope. It has shown us a way to make a major dent in the production of meth. This is the major reason why so many states have followed suit, retailers have taken voluntary action, and the Judiciary Committee is poised to take up the bill. It is my hope the Committee and the Congress will approve this legislation so that we can help bring this epidemic under control.”**

Senators Talent and Feinstein first introduced the Combat Meth Act in January 2005. Since that time, they have worked with law enforcement, retailers, and consumers to develop strengthened legislation that continues to place strict limitations on pseudoephedrine products while ensuring that legitimate consumers continue to have access to cold medicines.

The following individuals, organizations, and companies have endorsed the legislation:

Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies

California Attorney General Bill Lockyer
Fertilizer Institute
Food Marketing Institute
Healthcare Distribution Management Association
Missouri Governor Matt Blunt

Missouri Highway Patrol

National Association of Chain Drug Stores
Safeway
Wal-Mart

The strengthened 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 develop regulations 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.
- **Creates an airport exemption** – Allows retail facilities located within a commercial airport to sell cold medicine with pseudoephedrine (in liquid form or gel caps) in single packages containing no more than 360 milligrams in a 24-hour period and requires them to follow the log book procedures established by the bill.
- **Sets a national standard**, but allows states to determine appropriate penalties.
- **Effective Date** – Cold medicines containing only pseudoephedrine must be moved behind the counter within 90 days of enactment. Those medicines with pseudoephedrine and other ingredients must be moved by January 1, 2007.
- **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

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.

States with similar laws to Oklahoma

Following enactment of the Oklahoma law last year, 8 other states have followed suit.

Those who have passed legislation includes:

Arizona
Arkansas
Iowa
Kansas

Missouri
Texas
West Virginia
Wisconsin

Voluntary Action by Retailers

A number of major retailers have also taken voluntary action to limit access to cold medicine containing pseudoephedrine:

Target
Wal-mart
Albertson's
Rite-Aid
Walgreen's

CVS
K-Mart
Shopko
Longs Drugs
Safeway

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