



Senator Guess and Representative Crawford Work to Curb Meth Production

There is little doubt methamphetamine (“meth”) production and use is on the rise in our state. According to the Department of Public Safety, meth production arrests have doubled and distribution arrests have quadrupled since 2001. In response to this disturbing trend, we have introduced legislation (Senate Bill 106 and House Bill 141) to increase law enforcement’s ability to curb meth production.

Unfortunately, amateur “cooks” in makeshift laboratories can produce meth. They follow simple instructions and recipes, which are readily available on the Internet. These recipes typically involve common household items anyone can purchase in a supermarket or a convenience store. One of the primary ingredients used in meth production is pseudoephedrine, more commonly known as the cold remedy Sudafed.

Our bills would limit the sale and possession of pseudoephedrine to no more than nine grams (300 Sudafed pills of 30 mg each) per individual every 30 days. This restriction would allow a person to purchase enough pseudoephedrine to take it as directed every day for a month while making it more difficult for criminal drug producers to acquire the large quantities they need for meth production. We realize, however, legitimate pseudoephedrine users may need to purchase more than nine grams in a 30-day period. For this reason, we have provided an exemption stating anyone with a valid physician’s prescription will not be limited in the amount of pseudoephedrine they can purchase.

Additionally, our bills will require retailers to keep pseudoephedrine products behind a service counter to prevent shoplifting, and require photo ID and a signature for all purchases of these products. Retailers will also keep a log of sales, which will be made readily available to the Department of Public Safety and the Anchorage Police Department upon request. These provisions are not meant to place undue burden on retailers; they are meant to aid law enforcement in curbing meth production.

We modeled our bills on a law passed in the state of Oklahoma in April of 2004. Since then, meth lab seizures there have reportedly fallen by 80 percent. It is our hope implementation of a similar law, adapted and modified to meet our state’s unique needs, will yield positive results as well.

<http://guess.akdemocrats.org> -- <http://crawford.akdemocrats.org>