



Talent-Feinstein Bill Would Limit Access To Key Ingredient Used To Make Meth

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(WASHINGTON, D.C.) U.S. Senators **Jim Talent (R-Mo.)** and **Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.)** have introduced bipartisan legislation to curb methamphetamine production by moving pseudoephedrine, the primary ingredient to make meth, behind the pharmacy counter. The comprehensive legislation, the *Combat Meth Act (S.103)* also provides new resources to help law enforcement fight meth in America's neighborhoods. Missouri and California lead the nation in the production of methamphetamines.

"This legislation is a dagger at the heart of meth manufacturing in America," said **Senator Talent**. "If you can't get pseudoephedrine, you can't make meth. Our bill will make it harder for the dishonest people to get this ingredient, while ensuring honest people can access the drugs they need. We also provide additional resources to local law enforcement and prosecutors so they can crack down on meth dealers. This is the most comprehensive anti-meth bill ever considered by Congress."

"Today we launch a major assault against meth," **Senator Feinstein** said. "Meth use has swept across the nation and reached epidemic levels. The most effective thing we can do to make meth harder to manufacture is to put cold medicine behind the counter at pharmacies and require purchasers to sign for it and show photo ID. This follows the Oklahoma model, which has cut meth lab seizures by as much as 80 percent. The time has come to replicate that program and take a strong stand."

Because pseudoephedrine is found in many over the counter cold and sinus medicines such as Sudafed, meth cooks can purchase, or steal the ingredient in large quantities. Talent and Feinstein's bill would classify pseudoephedrine as a Schedule V drug, meaning products containing pseudoephedrine must be kept behind a pharmacy counter and sold only by a pharmacist or pharmacy technician.

Oklahoma passed a law last year limiting the sale of products containing pseudoephedrine, and since its inception, meth lab seizures have declined by about 80 percent.

Buyers can purchase 9 grams over a 30 day period. They would be required to present proof of identification and sign for the medicine upon purchase. In order to ensure that rural communities without pharmacy access are not negatively impacted, the legislation provides for the Director of

the Federal Drug Administration to authorize others to sell the medicines so long as they follow the same procedure.

Large sales of cold medicines would be more closely monitored to track suspicious sales. To monitor the sale of these products, the legislation provides funding for Methamphetamine Precursor Monitoring Grants, allowing states to create programs to track purchases of pseudoephedrine. A functional monitoring program will allow law enforcement officials to track and ultimately prevent suspicious buying behavior of ingredients for meth production.

Additionally, the Combat Meth Act includes the following features to help law enforcement fight methamphetamines:

- **PROVIDE CRITICAL RESOURCES TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTORS** – Provides an additional \$15,000,000 under the COPS program to train state and local law enforcement to investigate and lock-up methamphetamine offenders and expands the methamphetamine “hot spots” program to include personnel and equipment for enforcement, prosecution and environmental clean-up.
- **EXPAND THE ABILITY OF LOCAL PROSECUTORS TO BRING METHAMPHETAMINE DISTRIBUTORS TO JUSTICE** – Provides \$5,000,000 to hire additional federal prosecutors and train local prosecutors in state and federal meth laws and cross-designates them as Special Assistant U.S. Attorneys, allowing them to bring legal action against cooks and traffickers in federal courts under tougher guidelines.
- **PROVIDE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY THE SPREAD OF METH** – Provides \$5,000,000 in grant funding for Drug Endangered Children rapid response teams to promote collaboration among federal, state, and local agencies to assist and educate children that have been affected by the production of methamphetamine.
- **ENHANCE TREATMENT OPTIONS** – Authorizes the creation of a Methamphetamine Research, Training and Technical Assistance Center which will research effective treatments for meth abuse and disseminate information and technical assistance to states and private entities on how to improve current treatment methods.

Talent and Feinstein’s Combat Meth Act is co-sponsored by **U.S. Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Evan Bayh (D-Ind.), Gordon Smith (R-Ore.), Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Norm Coleman (R-Minn.), Mark Dayton (D-Minn.), Ken Salazar (D-Colo.), Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.), Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.), Ben Nelson (D-Neb.), Trent Lott (R-Miss.), Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), Mark Pryor (D-Ark.) and Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.)**

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