



San Diego County Sheriff's Department

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William D. Gore, Sheriff

Thomas J. Cooke, Undersheriff

June 4, 2010

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing this letter respectfully asking your assistance to enact federal legislation that will require a doctor's prescription for medication containing pseudoephedrine (PSE).

Methamphetamine has plagued San Diego County for many years. Despite progress, methamphetamine remains the number one abused drug in our county. The San Diego County Meth Strike Force publishes a report card each year. Here are some disturbing statistics from the 2009 Report Card:

- 4,400 arrests for meth sales and possession;
- 28% of adult arrestees tested positive for meth;
- 34% of all drug treatment admits were for meth addiction.

San Diego County also experienced a record level of meth seizures at the Ports of Entry in 2009. Clearly the meth problem poses a major threat to the health, welfare and safety of the residents of San Diego County as well as the rest of the nation.

Methamphetamine laboratory incidences are increasing throughout the United States and are at an intolerable level in California. Although California no longer seizes the most meth labs in the country, because of the large size of California's meth labs, our production capacity exceeds that of the top four states combined. The sole source for the essential precursor needed to make meth is PSE purchased at retail outlets. If we effectively control the legal access of PSE, we will control the domestic production of meth.

Despite the great optimism originally posed by electronic tracking systems or databases used to monitor PSE sales, law enforcement is now convinced that such systems cannot prevent PSE smurfing and the resurgence of domestic meth labs. The evidence that electronic tracking systems are an ineffective and wasteful policy continues to mount in several states, including California. Even if these systems, such as MethCheck, worked as promised, the enormity of the problem exceeds law enforcement's capacity to respond. To make matters worse, the sophistication of smurfers, particularly the use of multiple false identifications, has made these systems impotent and rendered them useless as a law enforcement investigative tool.

"Keeping the Peace Since 1850"

Senator Dianne Feinstein

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Fortunately there is a proven solution, but it faces great opposition from those who profit from this blight. Nearly four years ago the State of Oregon enacted legislation that required a prescription for PSE medications and the results have been an undisputable and resounding success. Once seizing several hundred meth labs each year, Oregon has reduced its meth lab seizures by 98%, having only seized 10 meth labs in all of 2009. In addition, Oregon used to remove 30 to 40 drug endangered children from meth labs each year. Since enacting its legislation four years ago, Oregon has removed only one child from a meth lab, and that lab was not operating. Oregon has achieved this success at a time when other states have experienced dramatic resurgence in meth lab incidences. This includes states that have implemented electronic tracking systems, such as Kentucky, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Oregon's success also includes the sharpest decrease in violent and property crimes in the nation. Additionally, all of this was achieved with few consumer complaints and widespread support from the law enforcement community, pharmacists, medical professionals, and health services.

The domestic meth lab problem is daunting, but we have a solution that is supported by empirical and quantifiable results. PSE is not an essential medication and it doesn't cure anything – it is one of many products that are used to treat symptoms of a stuffy nose. Armed with the knowledge that returning PSE to a prescription status, as it was prior to 1976, will have a profound impact on this human and environmental misery caused by meth labs, it is unconscionable to not implement our only viable solution and end this suffering that has persisted for far too long.

Thank you for your interest and leadership in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William D. Gore".

William D. Gore, Sheriff

WDG:km