

March 10, 2006

Tom Raynes  
President  
Colorado District Attorney's Council  
9008 N US Highway 85  
Littleton, CO 80125-9915

Dear Mr. Raynes:

On Thursday, March 9, 2006, the President signed into law a reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act. This legislation also included a proposal that I cosponsored in the Senate to help prevent the spread of methamphetamine. This initiative, the Combat Meth Act, will provide tools and resources to law enforcement to crack down on meth producers and distributors, increase community awareness and establish new treatment options.

Methamphetamine is perhaps the most addictive, destructive, and rapidly spreading illegal drug in the nation today. Because it is so addictive and so easy to obtain, it has a devastating effect on men, women, children, families and communities across the country. That is one of the reasons a recent survey by the National Association of Counties found that a majority of local law enforcement officials ranked meth as the most serious challenge they face. Methamphetamine has had a disproportionately devastating effect on our nation's rural communities – including those in Colorado – which often lack necessary resources to confront the problem as well as access to critical prevention and treatment.

While this battle will be fought and won at the state and local levels, the federal government can be a more effective partner in this effort by providing local law enforcement agencies with the tools they need to effectively halt the spread of meth. The Combat Meth Act would take several specific steps toward that end. In terms of direct assistance to state and local law enforcement, the Act would:

- Provide an additional \$99 million per year to train state and local law enforcement to investigate and lock-up meth offenders and expand funding available for personnel and equipment for enforcement, prosecution and environmental clean-up;
- Provide \$20 million in grant funding in 2006 and 2007 to promote collaboration among federal, state, and local agencies to assist and educate children that have been affected by the production of methamphetamine;

In addition, the legislation will:

- Restrict the sale of products containing pseudoephedrine, ephedrine, and phenylpropanolamine (PPA) – the primary ingredients in methamphetamine – by placing them behind the counter, requiring purchasers to show identification, signing a logbook, and limiting purchases per person to 3.6 grams in a single day and 9 grams a month;
- Create a new meth precursor Scheduled Listed Chemicals Section in the Controlled Substances Act, which imposes tougher penalties for meth cooks;
- Enhance international enforcement of meth trafficking by requiring new reporting and certification procedures of the largest exporting and importing countries of pseudoephedrine, ephedrine, and PPA;
- Enhance environmental regulation of methamphetamine byproducts; and
- Strengthen criminal penalties for meth production and trafficking.

The goal of the Combat Meth Act is to cut off criminals from the ingredients they need to cook meth, while ensuring that law-abiding consumers continue to have access to the products they need. This approach is modeled on an Oklahoma law that resulted in an immediate 80-percent drop in meth labs seized.

I am extremely pleased that Congress passed this important legislation, and that the President has signed it into law. I hope you and your communities are able to take advantage of the new resources available through this legislation. Myself and my offices around the state stand ready to assist you in any way. I ask that you please contact us with any questions. I look forward to continuing to work with law enforcement agencies across Colorado to halt the spread of methamphetamine once and for all.

Sincerely,



Ken Salazar  
United States Senator