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Gov. Blagojevich signs legislative package aimed at halting the ravages of methamphetamine in Illinois

Announces \$3.5 million in funding for local meth efforts

GRANITE CITY - In an effort to curb the alarming problem of methamphetamine production and use ravaging Illinois communities, Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich signed several new laws that give law enforcement more tools to protect Illinois families and farmers. The comprehensive legislative package creates new criminal offenses to help law enforcement crack down on people who assist in the dangerous meth-manufacturing process, gives meth-addicted inmates access to treatment and help before they're released back into their communities, and provides local law enforcement agencies with more support in closing down and cleaning up illegal meth labs. The Governor was joined by Attorney General Lisa Madigan, lawmakers and law enforcement officials.

In addition to signing legislation, Gov. Blagojevich announced more than \$3.5 million in federal funds that the state will use to help communities in 61 counties combat the highly addictive drug.

"Methamphetamine is one of the most addictive drugs on the streets right now. It not only destroys the lives of users, but it can pose huge dangers to families and entire communities where it is manufactured and used," said Gov. Blagojevich. "We're

marshaling our resources and coordinating with law enforcement at every level to stop the meth epidemic. These new laws will give local law enforcement more support in their efforts to protect their communities, ensure kids whose caregivers fall into the meth trap have safe and appropriate care, and help addicts who go to prison get help before they go home."

Methamphetamine, or meth, is a powerful stimulant that affects the central nervous system, and is derived from ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, commonly used in cold medicine. Statistics show that meth is a growing problem in Illinois. In 1997, law enforcement seized 24 meth labs. By 2004, that number increased substantially to 959. The drug has quickly become the most dangerous and perplexing problem for law enforcement, particularly in Central and Southern Illinois.

The Governor signed **Senate Bill 562**, the new Methamphetamine Control and Community Protection Act, initiated by Attorney General Lisa Madigan and sponsored by Sen. William R. Haine (D-Alton) and Rep. John Bradley (D-Marion). The new law creates a new, dedicated statute for crimes related to the manufacture, distribution, and use of meth. Senate Bill 562:

- Creates a new offense targeting those who buy or attempt to buy, transport or assemble meth-making materials other than pseudoephedrine, ephedrine or anhydrous ammonia.
- Creates a new offense targeting those who work as lookouts for meth manufacturers.
- Makes it a crime to dispose of meth manufacturing waste.
- Requires that those who manufacture meth in places like hotels, motels, apartment buildings or condominiums face mandatory prison time.
- Makes it a Class 1 Felony to possess, sell, or transport anhydrous ammonia for the purpose of making meth.

"While methamphetamine can be imported, it very often is 'homegrown' here in Illinois - made in someone's kitchen or the

trunk of a car. The Methamphetamine Control and Community Protection Act recognizes that meth is different than other drugs: meth manufacture can cause just as much harm - sometimes even more harm - than its distribution and use," Attorney General Madigan said. "This new law offers greater protection to those who are most endangered by the manufacture of meth in Illinois, including children, law enforcement, families and entire communities."

The new statute created by SB 562 is expected to improve the ability of law enforcement and prosecutors to hold meth offenders responsible for their crimes. It goes in to effect 30 days from today, on September 11th, 2005.

"We have got to take a stand against this drug and we have to act now," said Sen. Haine. "There's a lot at stake for our communities and we have an obligation to ensure an individual's rights to live in a safe environment."

"I am proud that the Governor is signing Senate Bill 562 and House Bill 2411 today," said Rep. Bradley. "The Governor recognizes the crisis that we have in this state regarding methamphetamine and he is taking the significant steps to work with us in addressing this issue."

"This new law will make it easier for law enforcement officers to bring charges against and prosecute the criminals who produce methamphetamine," said Rep. Daniel Beiser (D-East Alton), a co-sponsor of SB 562. "Meth producers are popping up in our neighborhoods all over this area and it is becoming more of a problem every day. I held a town hall meeting to address this growing concern and I am committed to protecting families from the problems associated with this deadly drug. I appreciate the attention the Governor has given this issue by signing SB 562 into law."

In addition to signing critical legislation to combat meth, the Governor earmarked more than \$3.5 million in federal funding to crack down on meth-making, selling, and use of meth and other illicit drugs throughout Illinois. This funding will aid 20 multijurisdictional narcotics units fighting drug crimes in 61 Illinois counties.

"Some of our law enforcement agencies in smaller, rural areas are overwhelmed with the growing demand on resources and manpower that the meth epidemic requires," said Gov. Blagojevich. "This funding will provide a much-needed boost to rural counties as they continue working on the frontlines to fight this epidemic."

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) will administer Justice Assistance Grant funds to multijurisdictional narcotics units, also known as metropolitan enforcement groups (MEGs) and drug task forces, throughout the state. The ICJIA is the state agency designated by the Governor to administer Justice Assistance Grant funds awarded to Illinois by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Each unit creates individualized strategies to address the drug problems facing each county. Methamphetamine remains a major focus of task forces in central and southern Illinois. Seizure of marijuana, heroin, cocaine, ecstasy, and other designer drugs are priorities for northern counties, including DuPage, Kane, and Lake. Multijurisdictional narcotics units were first introduced in 1991. In 2004, MEGs and task forces:

- Made 3,962 drug arrests, resulting in 2,233 convictions.
- Identified and seized 961 clandestine meth labs. Rural MEGs and task forces were responsible for more than 65 percent of all meth lab seizures in 2004.

- Seized 332,155 grams of meth, up 57 percent from 2003.
- Seized 1,019,177 grams of cocaine, up 31 percent from 2003.

"These units have made a significant impact on the drug trade in Illinois," said Authority Executive Director Lori G. Levin. "We want to support their efforts by providing the resources they need to fight the production, sale, and use of illegal drugs across the state."

The counties receiving funding, along with the amount of the grants, are listed at the bottom of this release.

Gov. Blagojevich also signed the following bills addressing the manufacturing of methamphetamine:

- **Creation of a treatment pilot program:** Sponsored by Rep. John Bradley (D-Marion) and Sen. Gary Forby (D-Benton), **House Bill 2411** creates the Methamphetamine Abusers Pilot Program at the Franklin County Juvenile Detention Center and Franklin County Jail. People convicted of unlawful possession of meth and who are determined to have an abuse or addiction problem with the drug may be ordered to participate in the pilot program. Once enrolled, the individual will receive needed medical and psychiatric treatment for methamphetamine abuse or addiction for 90-180 days. The court will approve the individual treatment plans in consultation with the Department of Human Services. The new law goes in to effect January 1, 2006.

"House Bill 2411 recognizes that these people have a problem," said Sen. Forby. "They've fallen victim to a very powerful narcotic and need our help to get their lives back under control."

- **Educational seminars for judges:** Sponsored by Rep. Dan Brady (R-Bloomington) and Sen. Mattie Hunter (D-Chicago), **House Bill 3515** requires the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts to conduct education seminars for judges throughout the state on how to operate drug court programs with

a specific emphasis on cases involving the illegal possession of meth. HB 3515 is effective immediately.

"We must equip our judges with the knowledge needed to better understand how methamphetamine affects individuals, communities, and all persons involved dealing with a drug as volatile and complicated as methamphetamine. There is too great a risk in having these offenders released unnecessarily, only to return to their community to manufacture more meth," said Sen. Hunter.

- **Reimbursement for costs of fighting meth:** Because combating methamphetamine is costly for local law enforcement agencies, Rep. Robert W. Pritchard (R-Sycamore) and Sen. Dale A. Righter (R-Mattoon) sponsored legislation to address the issue of funding the fight against meth. **House Bill 3504** creates the Methamphetamine Law Enforcement Fund, which will provide money to local law enforcement for costs associated with fighting meth. The legislation directs the \$100 fine currently collected from meth offenders into the new Fund. The money in the Fund will be allocated to local law enforcement agencies to reimburse the costs of securing and cleaning meth manufacturing sites, defray the costs of employing officers, and defray the costs of medical or dental expenses resulting from the incarceration of meth addicts. The new law goes in to effect January 1, 2006.

Sen. Righter added, "My main concern is for the citizens in southern and central Illinois where methamphetamine and problems associated with this readily attainable, highly addictive poison have already taken a toll. Under the new law, the individuals who choose to place others in harm's way will now bear the responsibility. We hope that their arrest, conviction, and the associated fine will lessen the financial burden for innocent victims and assist law enforcement their efforts to combat methamphetamine production and abuse."

- **Methamphetamine restitution:** Sponsored by Sen. Dale A. Righter (R-Mattoon) and Rep. David Reis (R-Olney), **House**

Bill 3507 clarifies that the restitution required of meth offenders whose manufacture of the drug required an emergency response will include the cost of reasonable regular and overtime costs incurred by local law enforcement as well as money paid by public agencies to private contractors to secure the site. It also requires that the restitution payments be disbursed equitably first to local agencies, then to state agencies, and finally to federal agencies involved in the emergency response. HB 3507 becomes effective January 1, 2006.

Protection of children found in a meth environment:

Sponsored by Rep. Roger L. Eddy (R-Hutsonville) and Sen. Dale A. Righter (R-Mattoon), **House Bill 3531** directs the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS), State Police (ISP), and State Board of Education to develop a protocol to deal with the growing problem of children who are exposed to meth manufacturing or use. The protocol will ensure that DCFS, law enforcement, and educators are involved with finding the best way to help these children. The agencies will determine an appropriate person for an affected child to stay with for proper care and supervision, including food, housing, and medicine, as well as making sure the child continues to attend school. State agencies have already begun to develop this official process and it will be posted on each agency's website after it is finalized. HB 3531 becomes effective January 1, 2006.

Removal of clandestine laboratory ingredients and

apparatus: Sponsored by Rep. Donald L. Moffitt (R-Galesburg) and Sen. Dale E. Risinger (R-Peoria), **House Bill 3532** requires the Illinois State Police to develop a protocol to be followed for the removal of any and all identifiable clandestine laboratory ingredients and apparatus. The protocol must be posted on the ISP's web site. HB 3532 is effective immediately.

Anhydrous ammonia security grants: Sponsored by Rep.

Chapin Rose (R-Charleston) and Sen. Richard J. Winkel, Jr. (R-Urbana), **House Bill 3526** will establish anhydrous ammonia security grant programs to improve security at anhydrous ammonia facilities by encouraging the use of industry approved ammonia additives, the installation of tank locking devices, or the installation of security systems to prevent the use of anhydrous ammonia in the illegal manufacture of methamphetamine. The law is effective immediately.

In February, under the direction of Gov. Blagojevich, the Illinois State Police (ISP) formed six dedicated Methamphetamine Response Teams responsible for investigating, seizing, and dismantling clandestine drug laboratories. The teams are located throughout Illinois and are dedicated to meth operations and available to assist local police agencies and task forces, especially in the area of manpower issues or concerns. The Illinois State Police offers these indicators of a clandestine lab:

- A strong odor of chemicals in the area or complaints from neighbors about strong smells coming from the property;
- Heavy fortification such as bars on the windows;
- Suspicious auto traffic and visitors to the site;
- Chemical cans or drums in the yard;
- People leaving the building just to smoke;
- Once you have determined that you have encountered a clandestine lab, exit the area immediately and contact your local law enforcement agency.

Law enforcement teams receiving Justice Assistance Grants include:

State Line Area Narcotics Team (SLANT) Task Force - \$149,995

Stephenson County

Winnebago County

Boone County

Lake County MEG - \$339,011

Lake County

North Central Narcotic Task Force - \$174,587

McHenry County

DeKalb County

Kane County

DuPage County MEG - \$182,000

DuPage County

Blackhawk Area Task Force - \$86,970

JoDaviess County

Carroll County

Whiteside County

Henry County

Lee County

Joliet Metropolitan Area Narcotics Squad - \$174,555

Grundy County

Will County

Zone 3 / LaSalle Task Force - \$73,292

LaSalle County

Bureau County

Quad-Cities MEG - \$39,869

Rock Island County

Kankakee MEG - \$188,413

Kankakee County

Multi-County MEG - \$88,974

Peoria County

Knox County

Marshall County
Tazewell County

Zone 6 Task Force - \$80,132

Livingston County
McLean County
DeWitt County

Vermilion County MEG - \$179,476

Vermilion County

Central Illinois Enforcement Group - \$173,200

Logan County
Mason County
Sangamon County
Morgan County
Christian County

West Central Illinois Task Force - \$166,736

Henderson County
Hancock County
McDonough County
Fulton County
Adams County
Brown County
Pike County

South Central Illinois Drug Task Force - \$106,330

Greene County
Macoupin County
Montgomery County

East Central Illinois Task Force - \$133,900

Shelby County
Moultrie County

Douglas County
Coles County

Southeastern Illinois Drug Task Force - \$167,503

Cumberland County
Clark County
Crawford County
Clay County

**Metropolitan Enforcement Group of Southwestern Illinois
\$584,497**

Madison County
St. Clair County
Monroe County

Southeastern Illinois Drug Task Force - \$167,503

White County
Franklin County
Saline County
Washington County
Clinton County

Southern Illinois Enforcement Group - \$178,122

Jackson County
Williamson County
Union County

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