



Vote No on Pseudoephedrine Restrictions

The ACLU of Eastern Missouri opposes Board Bill #340, which would require a prescription for certain cold and allergy products. We urge you to oppose the bill as well.

Some Background:

Ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, and phenylpropanolamine are precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. They are also common ingredients used to make cough, cold, and allergy products.

In an effort to curtail the clandestine production of methamphetamine, current federal and state law regulates retail over-the-counter sales of these medicines. Pseudoephedrine products can be sold only at a pharmacy and must be kept behind a counter. Buyers must show identification and sign a register.

Problems with Board Bill #340:

- Enacting a more restrictive law requiring a prescription will not keep meth producers from going to other cities, counties, or states to buy pseudoephedrine. This does nothing to combat meth production, but rather pushes one area's drug problem onto another.
- Missouri state law expressly permits the sale of pseudoephedrine products without a prescription. Ordinances by cities and counties are therefore a violation of state law.
- A law requiring a prescription for these products would make it difficult or even impossible for people who do not have their own physician, such as the poor or underprivileged, to have access to cold and allergy medicine.
- A law requiring a prescription would be overly restrictive to those who use the products for legitimate purposes, such as cold and allergy sufferers.
- Legislation should not burden the freedom of ordinary citizens when the requirement for a prescription would not be based on the danger of the drug itself, but only that it is a precursor to another drug. Based on that logic, many substances would then be illegal to access.
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