



OPERATION ALLIED AGAINST METH: OMNIBUS LEGISLATION

Background

In 2005, Attorney General Rob McKenna announced "**Operation: Allied Against Meth,**" his plan to fight methamphetamine abuse in Washington. The plan had three main components:

- Hire additional attorneys to help local prosecutors with complex drug felony cases;
- Partner with local community meth action teams, school-based prevention specialists and non-profit organizations such as Project Lead-On America to deliver a prevention message to school-age children; and Form a task force to advise him on a comprehensive anti-meth legislative package.

Operation Allied Against Meth Task Force

After the 2005 legislative session, AG McKenna convened the "Operation: Allied Against Meth" task force, comprised of representatives from federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, treatment programs, business, real estate, non-profit organizations, government and the Legislature.

The 26-member task force was organized into three committees:

- Demand Reduction;
- Cleanup and Governance; and
- Criminal Sanctions.

The work of these committees was finished in 90 days and the task force issued its final report on November 9, 2005.

SB 6239 (Sponsored by Senators Hargrove, Johnson, Doumit, Oke, Stevens, Esser)

Part I - Substance Abuse Reduction:

- Offsets any further federal grant cuts to our state's multi-jurisdictional drug task forces with direct state funding up to \$4 million. If no further cuts are enacted, restores funding levels back to the 2004 level.
- Creates a substance abuse and mental health treatment pilot project for meth users, with state matching funds to those counties who pass the 1/10 of one cent local option sales tax as authorized by SB 5763 (2005).
- Adds 100 additional therapeutic drug and alcohol treatment placements for prison above the January 2006 levels.
- Provides an additional \$1.575 million per year from 2007 through 2010 in drug enforcement funds to three multi-county areas for sheriff's deputies and prosecutors, focusing specifically on Pacific and Wahkiakum counties; Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield and Asotin counties; and Stevens, Ferry and Pend Oreille counties.
- Re-enacts the Drug-Free Work Place legislation which was allowed to sunset in 2001. This legislation provides a 5 percent worker's compensation premium discount for employers who meet Drug Free Workplace standards.
- Authorizes juvenile court drug courts in the drug court statute.
- DSHS to consult with faith-based organizations to discuss gaps in services for recovering addicts.
- Planning to increase access to existing special-needs transportation for recovering addicts.
- Study on media campaigns on meth use prevention, treatment promotion and underage drinking prevention.

Part II - Cleanup of Contaminated Property: To assist in protecting the public from exposure to the hazardous chemicals used in manufacturing meth, gives local health officers and authorities more tools to:

- Inspect property believed to be contaminated.
- Declare property unfit and prohibit its use.
- Require independent third-party sampling to verify proper decontamination of property.
- Evaluate property decontamination projects performed by licensed contractors to determine the adequacy of the work performed.

Part III - Criminal Penalties and Procedures: The task force did not recommend a wholesale increase in baseline criminal penalties for drug offenses. Instead the legislation:

- Requires all meth-related enhancements to run consecutively to all other sentences, as opposed to concurrently.
- Requires those convicted of meth-related offenses under the Drug Offender Sentencing Act to serve at least 12 months or half of the midpoint sentence range before receiving any "good time" off.
- Orders pre-sentencing investigations prior to imposing a sentence on a defendant who has been convicted of any felony drug or sex offense where the court has determined that chemical dependency has contributed to the offense.
- Amends the vulnerable adult neglect statute to include exposure to meth manufacturing as physical neglect.