



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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CHUCK CANTERBURY
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JAMES O. PASCO, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

27 June 2014

The Honorable William M. Thornberry
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Thornberry,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for H.R. 4975, the “Synthetic Abuse and Labeling of Toxic Substances (SALTS) Act,” which you have introduced.

The abuse of synthetic drugs has become a major problem, with increased reports from every region of the country indicating that individuals are committing violent acts while under the influence of these drugs. Many of these drugs induce elevated heart rates, increased blood pressure, and higher body temperature. They can also trigger seizures, hallucinations and highly agitated states, which make them very dangerous not just to the user but those around them as well.

In the previous Congress, the FOP supported legislation to schedule synthetic marijuana, bath salts, and other synthetic drugs as controlled substances but chemical manufactures have found a loophole in current law. Under the current statute, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) can prosecute the sale and distribution of these drugs or “analogue” drugs—which are similar, but not chemically identical to the scheduled substances. The loophole these manufacturers are exploiting is that the law on analogue drug sales and distribution does not include any substance “not intended for human consumption.” By identifying their products in this way, prosecutions have been made incredibly difficult despite the fact that manufacturers, distributors, sellers and abusers of these substances all know exactly what to do with them--ingest them or snort them to get a dangerous and unpredictable high.

The legislation you have introduced will require that a number of factors be considered when making a determination as to whether an analogue synthetic drug was intended to be consumed. These include the product’s marketing, known efficacy of the substance, price differential, diversion of the sale from legitimate channels to clandestine purchases and knowledge by the defendant of how the substance might be abused through human consumption. In addition, simply labeling the product as “not for human consumption” will no longer be a catch all defense against prosecution.

On behalf of the more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you for your continued leadership and support of law enforcement. I look forward to working with you and your staff to get this bill through Congress and give DEA the tools they need to combat the abuse of synthetic drugs. If I can of any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco at my Washington office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Canterbury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "C" at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail at the end.

Chuck Canterbury
National President