



LOUISIANA SENATE

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SENATOR FRED MILLS LEADS LATEST EFFORT TO BATTLE DESIGNER DRUGS

PREFILES MEASURE TO GIVE DHH AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ADDITIONAL TOOL TO ADDRESS GROWING PROBLEM

District 22 State Senator Fred Mills (R - Parks) is vowing to make every effort to keep Louisiana's communities and children safe. As part of this commitment, he has drafted a bill to be introduced in the 2012 Regular Legislative Session. The measure is designed to address the growing problem the state is facing regarding synthetic or "designer" drugs often sold in convenience stores.

Over the past two years, the legislature has outlawed specific synthetic drugs such as bath salts and synthetic marijuana but new substances are invented regularly, often while the legislature is not in session. Senate Bill 61 would allow the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) to declare a synthetic drug a "dangerous drug" and allow law enforcement officers the ability to seize those products from convenient store shelves until the legislature can make a ruling at the next regular session. Currently, DHH can only label a substance as a "controlled dangerous substance."

"This bill addresses a potentially dangerous situation where a new illegal drug is invented for criminal gain sometime during the interim between legislative sessions. A problem emerges where the health and safety of the public is put in jeopardy and the legislature will not be back in session to address these issues for several months," said Sen. Mills. "These illegal drugs have a high potential for abuse, have no acceptable medical use in treatment in the United States, and there is a lack of accepted safety for use of the substances under medical supervision making these substances highly addictive and potentially lethal."

The measure also makes it a criminal offense to sell substances which have been declared dangerous drugs by DHH, giving the District Attorney the ability to charge the person with criminal offenses and possibly racketeering which could result in the seizure of assets associated with the criminal activity.

The measure has been prefiled and can be found at www.legis.state.la.us.

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