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**ATTORNEYS GENERAL MADIGAN, ZOELLER CONVENE  
INTER-STATE SUMMIT ON METH, SYNTHETIC DRUG ABUSE**

**Evansville, Ind.** — Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Indiana Attorney General Greg Zoeller today convened an inter-state summit to tackle the region's growing threat of small-batch methamphetamine production and increasing use of synthetic drugs. Madigan and Zoeller said methamphetamine and synthetic drugs are a significant threat to public safety, and coordinated, inter-state strategies are needed to better protect communities in Illinois and Indiana.

The attorneys general spoke in Evansville, Ind., about the continued threats posed by methamphetamine and synthetic drugs after a summit involving law enforcement authorities and public health experts from Illinois and Indiana. Madigan and Zoeller said the popularity of chemically laced synthetic drugs among young people has exploded over the past year, and meth production levels are on the rise in both Illinois and Indiana. The attorneys general said today's summit was focused on strengthening vital inter-state partnerships to combat these drugs that continue to plague communities in both states.

"This inter-state summit underscores our shared concern for the growing use and manufacturing of methamphetamine and synthetic drugs," Zoeller said. "While our law enforcement community and state Legislature have employed some measures to crackdown on these crimes, very real problems still exist. Our hope is to explore targeted solutions and use the resources available to suppress this criminal activity."

"The fight against meth and synthetic drugs is a challenge shared across state borders," Madigan said. "These dangerous drugs present unique difficulties that require collaborative approaches. It's critical that we forge partnerships to enable law enforcement to adapt its response and better protect our communities' health and safety."

**Rise of New Meth Production Methods**

For more than a decade, meth production has threatened communities in Illinois and Indiana. Authorities have enacted a range of measures to crack down on the sale of the key ingredient in meth, pseudoephedrine, and strengthen penalties for those convicted of meth-related offenses.

While those measures have resulted in significant decreases in meth production, drug users are adapting and seeking to circumvent the restrictive purchasing measures by making smaller batches of meth through a method commonly called the "shake 'n bake" or "one-pot." This small-batch technique allows meth cooks to use legal amounts of pseudoephedrine to mix smaller amounts of the drug in two-liter plastic bottles. This method is both more dangerous and more difficult to detect because the production can be mobile as opposed to being made in an established lab.

In 2011, Zoeller supported a new law requiring retailers to submit ephedrine sales information to the National Precursor Log Exchange, which is made available to law enforcement. The law also prohibits the sale of ephedrine to an individual exceeding 7.2 grams in a 30-day period – down from 9 grams. In 2010, legislation was passed to prohibit a retailer from selling or the purchaser from buying more than 3.6 grams of ephedrine or pseudoephedrine in one day.

In Illinois, Attorney General Madigan has worked to combat the scourge of meth use and production as it has spread through downstate Illinois, drafting tough laws cracking down on the sale of pseudoephedrine and strengthening penalties for those convicted of meth-related offenses. In 2012, a Madigan-drafted bill went into effect that requires repeat meth offenders to have a prescription to purchase or possess products containing pseudoephedrine. The law targets the rise of "small-batch" cooks who obtain small, legal amounts of ingredients to make meth for their own use or for a quick sale.

Madigan also advocated for the implementation of the Methamphetamine Precursor Control Act, which restricts consumers from buying more than two packages of pseudoephedrine products at a time or products with more than 7,500 milligrams of pseudoephedrine in a 30-day period. Customers also must show photo identification and sign a purchasing log maintained by pharmacies. The restrictions contributed to a significant drop in the number of meth labs reported in the wake of the initiative's implementation.

### **Combating Synthetic Drug Use**

The attorneys general also addressed growing numbers of teens and young adults using synthetic drugs, which are chemically laced substances akin to marijuana, cocaine and meth. Synthetic drugs are divided into two categories based on their chemical make-up:

- Cannabinoids, popularly known as K2 or Spice, which consist of lab-manufactured THC that acts as a chemically formulated version of synthetic marijuana; and
- Cathinones, known as "bath salts," which contain chemical compounds designed to mimic the effects of cocaine or meth.

The attorneys general said the drugs' packaging often states the products are not intended for human consumption, but their design, labeling and marketing clearly allude to the product being smoked and inhaled. The drugs are extremely dangerous because buyers do not know what chemicals they are ingesting – individual products can contain a vast range of different chemical formulations and potencies, some of which can be two to 500 times stronger than THC.

Many states initially responded to the rise of synthetic drug use by passing laws that banned specific formulas of synthetic marijuana and bath salts. But manufacturers have circumvented such regulations by replacing the banned synthetic cannabinoid or cathinone with a newer version that is not yet on the market and not yet known to authorities. These chemical modifications pose further risk to users, who are unaware of the strength of the new chemical combinations or the reactions they may cause.

Attorney General Madigan has been working on many fronts to increase awareness of the dangers of synthetic drugs in Illinois. In 2011, Madigan launched her "Operation Smoked Out" initiative, with investigators from her office working with local law enforcement agencies to get Illinois retailers in 24 counties to relinquish synthetic drugs on their shelves. In conjunction with this operation, Madigan proposed legislation to crack down on the retail sale of synthetic drugs. House Bill 5233 defines a "synthetic drug product" as one that contains a controlled substance not regulated by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration and would make it a Class 2 felony to distribute a synthetic drug product. The bill, which is awaiting gubernatorial approval, also addresses the fact that these drugs are sold in packages with misleading labels claiming the products are legal. The bill would make it a Class 2 felony to distribute a product with false or misleading labeling.

In Indiana, Zoeller also supported legislation this year which added bath salts and more than 60 other substances to the list of banned synthetic drugs. Retail merchants caught selling the drugs now face penalties including loss of their retail merchant certificate of business. To combat criminals from using other substances not on the list, the Board of Pharmacy now has rulemaking authority to add any that have been listed by other states or the federal government. In 2011, a law was passed in Indiana to add synthetic cannabinoids and salvia to the list of controlled substances.

Attending today's summit from Illinois were Mike Wahl, medical director for the Illinois Poison Control Center, Gallatin County Sheriff Shannon Bradley, Jackson County Sheriff Robert Burns, Union County Sheriff David Livesay, Williamson County Sheriff Bennie Vick and representatives of the Illinois State Police Meth Control Unit. Attending from Indiana were representatives from the Indiana State Police, Indiana Pharmacy Board, Vanderburgh County Prosecutor's Office, Evansville Police Department, Gibson County Sheriff's Office, Vigo County Prosecutor's Office, Vigo County Sheriff's Office, Terre Haute Police Department, Indiana Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association. Indiana legislators also participated, including: State Reps. Rob Bacon, Wendy McNamara, Gail Riecken, Milo Smith, State Sens. Vaneta Becker and Jim Tomes. Representatives from Congressman Larry Buschon's office also attended the meeting.

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