



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Democratic Caucus Secretary Jennifer L. Mann *JLM*

DATE: December 20, 2010

SUBJECT: Re-introduction of Synthetic Marijuana/Salvia Legislation

In the near future, I will re-introduce former **House Bill 176** from the 2010 Legislative Session which will make it illegal to possess any product or substance that contains synthetic marijuana or Salvia Divinorum. This is the same legislation that passed the House by a near unanimous 198 to 1 margin last session.

Synthetic marijuana consists predominantly of dried plants, which are sprayed or laced with various chemical substances. When smoked, it can cause symptoms far more dangerous than its natural counterpart. Salvia Divinorum is considered to be the most potent naturally occurring hallucinogen in the world; as potent as LSD. It can be smoked or ingested to produce strong hallucinogenic experiences.

Both synthetic marijuana and Salvia have been the cause of numerous accounts of hospitalizations and even fatalities. The American Association of Poison Control Centers reported that throughout 2010, synthetic marijuana use accounted for more than 2,000 calls to their centers.

Synthetic marijuana products are legally sold and marketed under such trade names as "Spice", "Hawaiian Haze", and "K2." They are packaged and sold through various outlets, such as "head shops", while Salvia is easily available over the internet. Alarmingly, since these substances are currently legal, they may be falsely viewed as being safe - especially by teens and young adults.

Numerous states have already banned these substances. In addition, several branches of our armed forces have done the same. Most recently, the US Drug Enforcement Agency banned a few, but not nearly all, of the chemicals used to make synthetic marijuana.

Because both synthetic marijuana and Salvia Divinorum pose such serious health risks to Pennsylvanians in general, and our youth in particular, we in the Legislature must act swiftly. I hope that you will join with me in co-sponsoring this important legislation.

If you would like to become a co-sponsor, please contact Kira Zickler in my office via email kzickler@pahouse.net.

Former co-sponsors of **HB176** were: Baker, Boyd, Brennan, D. Costa, Daley, Denlinger, Geist, Grucela, Harhai, Hennessey, Kortz, Kotik, Mahoney, Matzie, Millard, Miller, Phillips, Pyle, Readshaw, Siptroth, Stern, Tallman, Vulakovich, Youngblood, Swanger, Josephs, Moul, Casorio, Clymer, True, R. Taylor, Lentz, Quinn, Day, Caltagirone, Beyer, and Scavello.