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February 27, 2014

Delegate John Ellem  
Minority Chair, West Virginia House Judiciary Committee  
West Virginia House of Delegates  
State Capitol Complex, Room 150R  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Dear Delegate Ellem,

It is my understanding you are trying to help pass a bill to require a prescription for the purchase of pseudoephedrine to reduce methamphetamine production in West Virginia. I wish you success as such a program worked extremely well in Mississippi.

In 2010, our state was struggling to combat methamphetamine lab activities and the havoc each one creates. Our state's answer was to require a prescription for the purchase of pseudoephedrine products through scheduling.

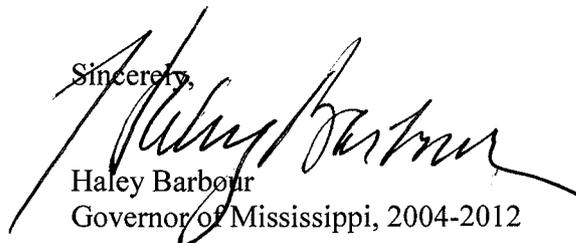
During the debate on scheduling pseudoephedrine, industry lobbyists, as an alternative to requiring a prescription, promoted various electronic tracking methods. Mississippi was already tracking sales. According to my Bureau of Narcotics, no state has the resources to monitor a tracking system, and no e-tracking system has reduced methamphetamine lab activity in the long term. Mississippi was no exception.

The simple truth is that Mississippians did not want us to track the sale of pseudoephedrine to reduce methamphetamine labs; they wanted us to eliminate them.

The Mississippi Legislature passed HB 512 during the 2010 Regular Legislative Session by an overwhelming majority. This bi-partisan bill may be the most significant drug enforcement legislation in the history of Mississippi. The numbers tell the story: 83% reduction in the number of methamphetamine lab related incidents and a 98% reduction in operational methamphetamine labs. Countless lives saved.

Naysayers predicted that Medicaid costs would skyrocket, and the public outcry would affect re-elections. I am happy to say that simply did not happen. This is and should be a non-partisan issue. This is a public safety and a public health issue which had broad support from the health care community, as well as law enforcement. Good luck in your 2014 session, and I wish you success in making the best decision for West Virginia.

Sincerely,



Haley Barbour  
Governor of Mississippi, 2004-2012

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