

## Testimony for HB7

I would have to start by saying that I never thought I would have had a bad trip on synthetic herb, most times people have bad trips from mushrooms or acid but that herb I had was unlike anything I'd ever heard of. I had started smoking spice in February of this year and smoked on weekends. The appealing side of this herb was that it gave a marijuana like high for about 3 hours with just a couple of hits and the best part being that you didn't have to worry about drug tests because it passed for friends that I knew in the military so passing standard tests was not a problem.

Now another plus to this herb was that unlike normal weed, this herb is not supposed to produce any paranoia, and there was no sign of being high at all, such as no red eye, no half open eyes and you were able to basically be a functional stoner, you could be in public and not look or smell high in anyway. This of course was very appealing to me and many of my friends who also couldn't smoke weed because of drug tests at their jobs.

The brand of spice I had been smoking for about 6 months was called red dawn, spark 20. The herb I smoked the night of my incident was called spike, max. I only had 2 hits and less than 2 minutes later I was losing my perception of what was real in every way, it turned everything into a fuzzy cartoon like picture and I lost control of my legs that I couldn't walk at all. I couldn't talk. I could hear what I thought and what I wanted to say, but all I was spitting out was gibberish. This went on for what felt like many hours. I can remember thinking to myself that I wasn't actually going come out of this craziness and this might be how I end up dying! I remember telling my brother to call 911 and remember going into the ambulance and ending up in the hospital for a day. The doctors haven't had an incident with synthetic herb until that night and I had to basically be flushed out for 10 hours.

I know many people are still going to want to try spice but the fact it's just a bunch of chemicals sprayed on tobacco and nobody knows what the long term affects of this herb are and the scary thing is that this stuff is so easy to purchase. The price has dropped here in town from \$53 a gram down to \$30 a gram, which is just a bit more than the going rate for actual weed.

I would have thought this herb was completely harmless but the fact that a regular smoker such as myself could even have a bad experience as bad as mine was a huge eye opener to just how bad this stuff really is. The fact that it's very easy to get in town and that it only takes a little bit to get to a mind altering high is spooky. I know a large number of kids in town have had a substance abuse problem and this drug is dangerous because of the fact you can have an herb that twists reality in such a way that you can't tell what's real and what's a hallucination. I see this problem getting worse in the near future because it's a new drug that is easy to obtain and has a weed like high and at the same time has dangerous side effects.



January 31, 2011

Alaska House of Representatives

RE: Synthetic Cannabinoids

To Whom it May Concern,

The purpose of this correspondence is to support House Bill 7 that would list certain synthetic cannabinoids found in "K2" or "Spice" as Scheduled controlled substances which will provide law enforcement will have the necessary authority to prosecute the sell and possession of these substances. These drugs are currently being sold in several local vendors which sends the social message that they are not harmful and social acceptable; thereby, increasing the risk for youth consumption and related consequences.

K2/Spice products are a mixture of herbal/spice plant products sprayed with potent psychotropic drugs, often contaminated with unidentified toxic substances which is marketed under variety of names including K2, Spice, Pep Spice, Spice Silver, Spice Gold, Spice Diamond, Smoke, Sence, Skunk, Yucatan Fire, Genie & Zohai and sold in variety of colors/flavors-usually sold in foil packaging

The growing popularity of these drugs is causing increasing alarm among law enforcement officials, lawmakers, and health care professionals across America. "Spice" has been banned by some U.S. domestic and overseas military commands as well as in Germany and other European countries because substances have been identified in the product to have the presence of chemicals with tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)-like effects.

The danger in smoking "Spice" is that the product is unregulated and not manufactured in a controlled environment. Smoking this product could be very harmful because the substance could also include unknown contaminants. Therefore, there is no way to accurately determine what the potential harmful effects could be.<sup>1</sup> Medical officials concur that smoking "Spice" can cause adverse effects to one's health. Hospitals have reported incidents of people, mostly

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<sup>1</sup> 4Mind Hacks: Spice flow: the new street drug pharmacology December 01, 2009, Accessed 13 May 2010 and Wikipedia Accessed 13 May 2010

teenagers, visiting emergency rooms for: heart palpitations, respiratory issues, panic attacks, hallucinations, delusions, and, one case where a teen lapsed into a coma.<sup>2</sup>

The Mat-Su Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition seeks to reduce substance abuse among youth by advocating for and implanting evidence-based environmental strategies. These drugs are currently sold at local shops which increases access to the drug and sends the social message to young people that they are acceptable and not harmful.

I have attached legislation adopted by the state of Missouri which contains a list of the compounds used to create these drug which can be used by the Senate as a template to draft a similar bill/ordinance.

The Mat-Su Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition appreciates your time and consideration of this issue. If you would like any additional information, please contact the project coordinator, undersigned. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Desiree Compton, for Mat-Su Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition  
Project Coordinator  
124 W. Swanson, Suite C  
Wasilla, AK 99654  
(907) 373-5818  
[dcompton@unitedwaymatsu.org](mailto:dcompton@unitedwaymatsu.org)



**Vision:** Our vision is to enhance our community by supporting healthy lifestyles and drug free alternatives.

**Mission Statement:** To reduce substance abuse among youth and, over time, among adults by addressing the factors in our community that increase the risk of substance abuse and promoting the factors that minimize the risk of substance abuse.

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<sup>2</sup> "Synthetic Marijuana A Growing Trend Among Teens, Authorities Say", CNN/WIBW.com March 24, 2010.  
Accessed 10 May 2010



## FAIRBANKS POLICE

911 Cushman Street  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4616  
Phone (907) 450-6500  
Fax (907) 452-1588  
Email: [fpd@ci.fairbanks.ak.us](mailto:fpd@ci.fairbanks.ak.us)



January 21, 2011

Representative Cathy Munoz  
State Capitol Room 403  
Juneau AK 99801

Dear Representative Munoz:

As the Chief of Police for the Fairbanks Police Department, I would like to extend my support of House Bill No. 7 "An Act classifying certain synthetic cannabinoids as schedule IIA controlled substances."

According to the U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration, these substances have no known therapeutic use and are known to cause a variety of effects including seizures, hallucinations, psychotic episodes, and non-responsiveness. In addition the Alaska Information Analysis Center (AKIAC) has reported in studies that subjects have reported having difficulties with balance, slurred speech, and being light headed.

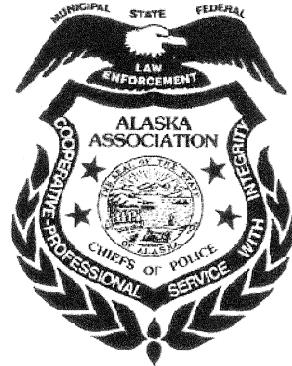
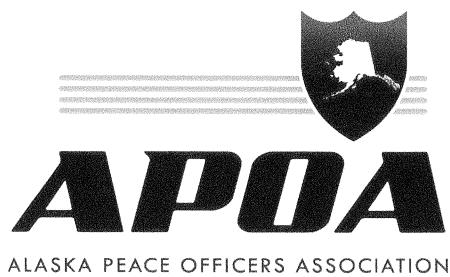
These cannabinoids present a significant threat to the safety of Alaska's citizens as long as they remain unclassified. Without this new legislation a person who is under the influence of synthetic cannabinoids while operating a motor vehicle is not in violation of the law. This presents a clear danger to the citizens of Alaska, as someone could potentially be under the influence of a synthetic cannabinoid while driving and experience hallucinations, seizures, or a psychotic episode. This is not a hypothetical situation and the Fairbanks Police Department has already investigated a motor vehicle accident where the driver of the vehicle was having seizures as a result of consuming synthetic cannabinoids.

By classifying synthetic cannabinoids as a schedule II controlled substance, the act of operating a motor vehicle under the influence of a synthetic cannabinoid would become an illegal act. This bill would therefore have a direct impact on the safety of the citizens of the State of Alaska.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laren Zager".

Laren Zager  
Chief of Police  
Fairbanks Police Department



February 14, 2011

Representative Cathy Muñoz  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Juneau AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Muñoz:

On behalf of our respective organizations, we would like to thank you for introducing HB 7, an Act classifying certain synthetic cannabinoids as schedule IIA controlled substances; and providing for an effective date.

We met recently to review proposed legislation and decided to unanimously support this bill.

Again, thank you for addressing this issue. Please contact the APOA office in Anchorage at 277-0515 if there is anything our organizations can do to assist in the passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

John Lucking Jr., President  
Alaska Peace Officers  
Association  
PO Box 240106  
Anchorage AK 99524

Tom Clemons, President  
Alaska Association of  
Chiefs of Police  
183 Nelson Ave  
Wasilla AK 99654

Michele Logan, President  
Women Police  
of Alaska  
PO Box 233306  
Anchorage AK 99523

cc: Reps. Carl Gatto, Bob Herron, Beth Kerftula,  
Bob Lynn, and Lance Pruitt

# MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE



Office of the Municipal Attorney  
Civil Division, Suite 730

Telephone: 907-343-4545  
Fax: 907-343-4550

*Mayor Dan Sullivan*

February 8, 2011

Chairman Carl Gatto  
House Judiciary Committee  
State Capitol, Room 118  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Vice-Chair Steve Thompson  
House Judiciary Committee  
State Capitol, Room 428  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: House Bill 7 and Senate Bill 17 - *Synthetic Cannabinoids*

Dear Representatives:

The Municipality of Anchorage supports the bills currently before the legislature. As I indicated last Friday before your Committee, the primary reasons to treat synthetic cannabinoids more serious than their organic equivalents is because the potency of the synthetics has been found to be up to 800 times greater than the organic, and the potency from sample to sample varies widely. We have evidence that this high potency induces hallucinogenic reactions and unpredictable behaviors that are far more dangerous to the user, and those who may come into contact with them, than marijuana. The variations in the strength of any one dose can cause users to get a mild reaction in one instance and fall into unconsciousness in another instance. We have had one death in Anchorage that can be directly attributed to the use of synthetic cannabinoids. The Municipality believes felony prosecution for the manufacture, production, distribution, and sale of synthetics is a necessary tool that should be available to law enforcement to discourage the use of these drugs.

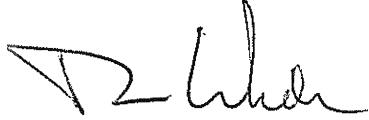
The Municipality supports providing the State Crime Lab with necessary resources to test for these drugs. As of a couple of months ago, we were aware of only two labs nationally that could test for these products in blood or urine. One lab could test urine samples and the other could test blood samples. In order to successfully prosecute people in the chain of production and consumption, we need the capability of testing both seized products and the bodily fluids of users. If properly resourced, having these tests performed locally and having local technicians available to testify, may save both money and time over using out-of-state labs.

February 8, 2011

Page 2 of 2

Please find included in our email the Powerpoint presentation our Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor uses. We have been making these presentations to the local military, business groups, and governmental agencies. We look forward to providing additional testimony on the bills in the coming weeks. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Dennis A. Wheeler  
Municipal Attorney

cc: Sara Gill, Special Assistant to the Mayor



Alaska Mental Health Board

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD  
ADVISORY BOARD ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE  
431 NORTH FRANKLIN STREET, SUITE 200  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801  
(907) 465-8920

February 3, 2011

Representative Cathy Munoz  
Alaska State Legislature  
Capitol Building, Room 403  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: HB 7 – Regulation of Synthetic Cannabinoids

Dear Representative Munoz,

On behalf of the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, I would like to express our appreciation of your bringing this important issue to the forefront. Synthetic marijuana or “cannabinoids” pose a grave risk to youth and adults, given the serious health consequences and impairments experienced by users of these drugs.

The dangers posed by synthetic marijuana are serious. While the base products may be natural, the chemicals used to mimic the properties of THC are not approved for human consumption. National news reports on the effects of these products include elevated heart rate and blood pressure, extreme anxiety, poisoning, nausea and vomiting, hallucinations, overdoses, and even addiction.

The American Association of Poison Control Centers reported more than 3,000 calls related to poisoning by synthetic marijuana products in 2010 – and nearly 400 calls since January 1 of this year. The U.S. Army banned use of synthetic marijuana by service members in August 2010. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) exercised its emergency scheduling authority to **temporarily** control five chemicals used in synthetic marijuana products (JWH-018, JWH-073, JWH-200, CP-47,497, and cannabicyclohexanol). This federal regulation is limited in duration (12-18 months), leaving Alaskans at risk after that time without the state taking action.

The effects of synthetic marijuana are being felt right here in Alaska. News reports of crimes involving these products have come from Fairbanks and Anchorage. The U.S. Army reported courts martial and non-judicial discipline of more than thirty soldiers in Alaska by December 2010. The Anchorage School District reports use by students (though not to the same extent as actual marijuana). Given the health consequences and the role synthetic marijuana can play in criminal activity, there is a more than adequate basis for the regulation of these products to protect the health and safety of Alaskans.

Thank you for your work to protect Alaskans from these harmful products.

Sincerely,

J. Kate Burkhart  
Executive Director

## Kendra Kloster

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**From:** Scott Spickler [sspickler@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 24, 2011 4:07 PM  
**To:** Kendra Kloster  
**Subject:** HB-7,SB17

To Representatives Munoz and Kerttula and Senator Egan

I would like to voice my support for the passage of HB 7 and SB 17 banning synthetic marijuana and the chemical substances that these "Herbal Incense" are laced with.

I feel that for this product to be sold off the shelf by local businesses to anyone is a criminal act and the penalties should be severe enough to discourage the sale and distribution of this meth like product.

The target market for synthetic pot, in my opinion, is typically anyone that is trying to avoid drug use detection by their employers, (including the military), as well as students participating in school sports at districts that have a drug testing program in place.

While people over 18 should know better than to smoke this substance, many do not understand the consequences of inhaling the unregulated chemicals sprayed on these herbs. I fear that the drug is going to cause irreparable harm or death to someone, and sadly that someone will likely be under the age of 18 to get the public's attention and to shed the light on the potential harm that this product can cause. However, passage of a law to criminalize the sale and possession can help circumvent that concern.

The Federal Government regulates the importation of toys painted with lead from China, sometimes not all that well quite honestly. Alaska should join the ranks of several other states that have already passed legislation of this particular poison from being so readily available on store shelves.

We don't need to make it easy for people to gain access to this drug.

Thank you,

Scott Spickler  
10754 Horizon Dr.  
Juneau, AK. 99801

789-3780 W.

## Kendra Kloster

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**From:** frank.b@gci.net on behalf of Frank Bergstrom [frank.b@gci.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 25, 2011 10:26 AM  
**To:** Kendra Kloster  
**Subject:** HB-7 and SB-17

Honorable Representatives Munoz and Kerttula, and Senator Egan:

Please support the above bills and outlaw synthetic cannabis products (Spice, K2, etc.).

- This family of drugs is intended to produce a high – thus users are impaired in any activities they may undertake (e.g. driving)
- These products appear to be falsely labeled and do not contain herbal plants, but rather cannabinoid compounds related to THC (active ingredient in pot); i.e., they lie

It would appear these products are a thinly veiled effort to bypass anti-marijuana rules to sell pot by-any-other-name. Whether it is pot or other, the stated intent is to produce a drugged high. That alone is sufficient to merit regulation as a controlled substance. At a minimum it should be so regulated – at best it would be made illegal. It's market is based on wriggling around anti-drug law. Let's close the door on the deceptive marketing of pot by-any-other-name. It is a drug (or group of drugs) being made available to the public essentially as an unregulated nutraceutical. This is a sham and should be ended.

Respectfully,

Frank Bergstrom

Frank Bergstrom  
PO Box 22909  
Juneau, AK 99802  
907-523-1995 phone/fax  
907-321-3637 cell  
[frank.b@gci.net](mailto:frank.b@gci.net)

## Kendra Kloster

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**From:** bruce@donabel.biz on behalf of Bruce Abel [bruce@donabel.biz]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 25, 2011 10:07 AM  
**To:** Kendra Kloster  
**Subject:** HB-7/SB17

Dear Representatives Munoz and Kerttula and Senator Egan:

I would like express my support and encourage you to pass HB 7 and SB 17 banning synthetic marijuana and the chemical substances that lace these "Herbal Incense". These substances should not be sold to anyone for any reason. The sale of such material should be designated a criminal act with penalties severe enough to discourage their sale and distribution.

As an employer with strict drug use policies the legal sale of synthetic narcotics creates untold liability. I think it is safe to say that if my fully loaded boom truck is in an accident with your loved ones and the driver has been enjoying "Herbal Incense" prior to the accident you won't be satisfied with a defense that the product was sold over the counter by a local business and is legal. Dead is dead. Legalizing these materials creates a liability nightmare for employers, school sports programs and endangers the public.

Alaska has more than its share of substance abuse problems so lets join with other states that have already passed legislation of this particular poison from being so readily available on store shelves.

Sincerely,

Bruce Abel  
President/CEO  
Don Abel Billing Supply  
9999 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, AK. 99801

## **Kendra Kloster**

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**From:** Kasen Spickler [kasen\_spickler@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 24, 2011 8:59 PM  
**To:** Kendra Kloster  
**Cc:** Scott Spickler  
**Subject:** HB-7, SB17

To whom it may concern,

I would like to voice my opinion in favor of banning synthetic marijuana in Alaska. It's a very dangerous drug and it doesn't belong in our state.

I have seen what smoking this does to a person and it was a very scary experience. Vomiting, very intense hallucinations, and high heart rate just to name a few symptoms. I believe if I wasn't around during this episode this person very well could have died. I think it's just a matter of time before it does take someones life.

I hope Alaska follows in many other states footsteps and bans this substance.

Kasen Spickler  
9690 N. Douglas Hwy.  
Juneau, AK 99801

(907) 723-9330