

Mat-Su Health Foundation Resolution Advocating for Limiting the Availability of Synthetic Drugs in the Mat-Su Borough

WHEREAS the Mat-Su Health Foundation's mission is to enhance the health of Alaskans living in Mat-Su, and where health is adversely affected by the use of illicit substances;

WHEREAS the 2013 Mat-Su Community Health Needs Assessment identified alcohol and substance abuse as a top health issue in Mat-Su based on valid and reliable data; and the Mat-Su community in 23 community meetings ranked alcohol and substance abuse as the number one health issue in Mat-Su;

WHEREAS herbal and/or chemical mixtures (synthetic drugs) are being marketed and sold in Mat-Su that are designed to mimic the effects of illicit substances, but are not necessarily controlled by federal or state law;

WHEREAS synthetic drugs pose an immediate threat to the public safety and to the health of young people in particular, and are causing unpredictable psychological and physical affects to users^{1,2};

WHEREAS there is evidence that the use of synthetic drugs by Mat-Su residents imposes a burden on the MSRMC emergency department³;

WHEREAS there is compelling evidence to support the assertion that limiting access to synthetic drugs is an effective way to decrease use and thereby the negative impact on individuals and communities^{4,5};

WHEREAS THRIVE Mat-Su, Mat-Su's Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, has voted to support public policy and laws to limit access to these synthetic drugs; and the Mat-Su Health Foundation is a member of THRIVE;

WHEREAS it is difficult for law enforcement to effectively and efficiently address the provision and marketing of these products through the application of current state and municipal laws;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Mat-Su Health Foundation supports local and state level policies, laws, and initiatives that will further limit access to synthetic drugs.

Approved by the Mat-Su Health Foundation Board of Directors on February 17, 2014



Linda Conover, Chair

¹ National Institute on Drug Abuse, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, & National Institutes of Health. (2012). Drug Facts: Spice (Synthetic Marijuana). www.drugabuse.gov.

² National Institute on Drug Abuse, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, & National Institutes of Health. (2012). Drug Facts: Synthetic Cathinones ("Bath salts"). www.drugabuse.gov.

³ Synthetic Drugs (a.k.a. K2, Spice, Bath Salts, etc.). The White House. Retrieved February 10, 2014, from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/ondcp-fact-sheets/synthetic-drugs-k2-spice-bath-salts>.

⁴ Bryan, S. (2013, August 5). Florida Synthetic Drug Ban Mostly Successful, Experts Say. *Sun Sentinel*. Fort Lauderdale, FL.

⁵ Nevel, J. (2013, June 6). State ban curbs synthetic drug use. *The State Journal-Register*. Springfield, IL.