

INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2007-187

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3 REQUESTING THE HOUSE AND SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC
4 HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH ARKANSAS GENERAL
5 ASSEMBLY TO STUDY A PROHIBITION ON THE SALE OF OVER-THE-COUNTER
6 MEDICATIONS TO ARKANSANS UNDER THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN (18) YEARS
7 IN VIEW OF THE GROWING DRUG ABUSE THREAT THAT OVER-THE-COUNTER
8 MEDICATIONS POSE FOR YOUNG ARKANSANS.
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10 WHEREAS, experts say teens and young adults are increasingly buying
11 over-the-counter cough syrups and cold medications to get high from one of
12 its main ingredients – Dextromethorphan or DXM. The ingredient is found in
13 about two hundred (200) products, including Robitussin DM and DayQuil. "It
14 causes dissociate hallucinations and out of body experiences," said Dr. Ilene
15 B. Anderson, a clinical professor at the University of California San
16 Francisco's School of Pharmacology, who compared the fix to "a PCP-like
17 high"; and
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19 WHEREAS, the Consumer Healthcare Products Association, which represents
20 nonprescription drug makers, launched a national campaign to educate the
21 public about cough medication abuse through Web sites, television and radio
22 spots, and educational brochures; and
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24 WHEREAS, abuse of these medications has become so common that young
25 people have even given them nicknames such as "Robo", "Skittles", "Syrup",
26 "Triple C," and "Tussin"; and
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28 WHEREAS, according to the California Poison Control System, the number
29 of Dextromethorphan overdoses reported in patients ages 9 to 17 increased
30 more than ten-fold. High doses of Dextromethorphan can cause serious medical
31 complications, including coma and death; and
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33 WHEREAS, growing concern about Dextromethorphan has led some drug
34 stores, such as Walgreens, to voluntarily prohibit teens from purchasing any
35 product containing the substance. A spokeswoman for Walgreens said the
36 restriction came last year after the company noticed teens buying up to ten

1 (10) packages at a time. Rite Aid limits the number of such products on
2 store shelves. But for many kids getting the products is as easy as opening
3 the home medicine cabinet; and
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5 WHEREAS, abuse of over-the-counter medications is expanding across the
6 nation and poses an increasing danger to young Arkansans,
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8 NOW THEREFORE,

9 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE AND SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC HEALTH,
10 WELFARE, AND LABOR OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH ARKANSAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY:
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12 Study a prohibition on the sale of over-the-counter medications to
13 Arkansans under the age of eighteen (18) years in view of the growing drug
14 abuse threat that over-the-counter medications pose for young Arkansans.
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16 Respectfully submitted,
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20 Representative Pace

21 District 100
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32 Filed: July 5, 2007

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