

March 9, 2006

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WASHINGTON, DC—U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) today voted for passage of legislation which will help combat methamphetamine trafficking. The meth provisions were included in H.R. 2829, the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization, and passed by a vote of 399-5.

Methamphetamine abuse is a widespread problem in Oregon. Oregon treats more people for meth addiction per capita than any other state in the country and is consistently ranked in the top 10 states nationally for meth lab seizures. DeFazio first became aware of the problem as a Lane County Commissioner, and as an active member of the Congressional Meth Caucus, he has supported numerous efforts to combat meth throughout his time in congress. Early in his congressional career, DeFazio introduced legislation to require the registration of the sales of all chemicals used to produce methamphetamine which was enacted as part of H.R. 5210, the Omnibus Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988.

The bill Congress passed today, H.R. 2829, the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization, earmarks \$15 million annually to combat methamphetamine trafficking in high-intensity drug trafficking areas. These funds will go to increase interagency cooperation of law enforcement groups in these areas. The measure requires that local agencies receiving these federal funds report on any methamphetamine lab seizures to the national clandestine laboratory database at the El Paso Intelligence Center.

DeFazio supported an amendment to require a national strategy to address the increased threat of methamphetamine, reduce demand, improve treatment and prevent the international diversion of precursor chemicals. “Methamphetamines have devastated the lives of too many Oregonians and their families. Communities throughout Oregon and the U.S. will face untold costs in responding to the human, environmental and health consequences of this scourge for years to come. The country needs a better strategy and adequate resources to fight this growing epidemic,” DeFazio said.

DeFazio is a cosponsor of H.R. 3889, the Methamphetamine Epidemic Elimination Act to cut off the availability of pseudoephedrine, a chemical precursor found in over-the-counter cold medicines and used to produce methamphetamine. The provisions of H.R. 3889 were signed into law today by President Bush as part of legislation to reauthorize the USA PATRIOT Act.

