

September 16, 2015

The Honorable Charlie Dent  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2211 RHOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Dent:

On behalf of the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), our 34,000 members and the more than 136 million patients we treat each year, I am writing to express ACEP's support for the "Synthetic Drug Control Act" and to thank you for your leadership on this important patient safety issue.

As emergency physicians, we see first-hand how these dangerous synthetic drugs harm users, increasingly sending them to the Emergency Department (ED) for treatment. The patients we care for often show up with symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, agitation and paranoia. Use of these drugs has even led to numerous overdoses and suicides.

Of particular concern to ACEP is the increasing availability and use of synthetic cannabinoids. According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, there were 5,230 synthetic marijuana exposure calls in 2012. Through September 13 of this year, there have already been 5,932 exposure calls and neither of these numbers account for ED presentations and hospital admissions of which the poison control centers are unaware. Your home state of Pennsylvania has been especially hard hit by the increasing use of synthetic marijuana, trailing only Mississippi, New York and Texas in the number of reported exposures this year.

Prohibiting the sale of synthetic drugs that imitate the hallucinogenic or stimulant properties of cocaine, ecstasy, methamphetamines or other illegal drugs is critical to limiting access to these unsafe and hazardous products. ACEP believes the provisions of your legislation to: (1) add more than 200 known synthetic drugs that have been identified by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration to Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act and (2) facilitate federal prosecution of the manufacturers, distributors and sellers of synthetic drugs will help curb access to these dangerous substances.

ACEP was honored to support your earlier efforts to enact the "Synthetic Drug Control Act of 2011" and we are proud to stand with you again to enact this legislation as well.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Gerardi, MD, FAAP, FACEP  
President, ACEP

WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE

2121 K Street NW, Suite 325  
Washington, DC 20037-1886

202-728-0610  
800-320-0610  
202-728-0617 (FAX)  
www.acep.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael J. Gerardi, MD, FACEP  
*President*  
Jay A. Kaplan, MD, FACEP  
*President-Elect*  
Rebecca B. Parker, MD, FACEP  
*Chair of the Board*  
Paul D. Kivela, MD, FACEP  
*Vice President*  
John J. Rogers, MD, CPHQ, CPE, FACEP  
*Secretary-Treasurer*  
Alexander M. Rosenau, DO, CPE, FACEP  
*Immediate Past President*  
Stephen H. Anderson, MD, FACEP  
James J. Augustine, MD, FACEP  
Vidor E. Friedman, MD, FACEP  
Jon Mark Hirshon, MD, PhD, MPH, FACEP  
Hans R. House, MD, FACEP  
William P. Jaquis, MD, FACEP  
Robert E. O'Connor, MD, MPH, FACEP  
Debra G. Perina, MD, FACEP

COUNCIL OFFICERS

Kevin M. Klauer, DO, EJD, FACEP  
*Speaker*  
James M. Cusick, MD, FACEP  
*Vice Speaker*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dean Wilkerson, JD, MBA, CAE