

Before the

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Statement of

**Thomas M. Siebel
Chairman and Founder
The Meth Project**

On

Breaking the Methamphetamine Supply Chain: Meeting Challenges at the Border

Tuesday, September 18, 2007

<http://www.methproject.org>

Introduction

Chairman Baucus, Ranking Member Grassley, and members of the Committee, my name is Tom Siebel, and I am the chairman of the Meth Project, a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing first-time Meth use through public service messaging, public policy, and community outreach.

It is an honor to be here today. I thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee on the subject of methamphetamine prevention.

The Meth Project

We started the Montana Meth Project in 2005 with the objective of dramatically reducing Meth use and developing a prevention program that could be replicated in states throughout the nation.

The Problem

As of September 2005 Montana was overwhelmed by methamphetamine abuse:

- Montana ranked #5 in the nation for per capita Meth abuseⁱ
- 50% of inmates were incarcerated for Methⁱⁱ
- 50% of foster-care admissions were Meth-relatedⁱⁱⁱ

Montana Meth Project Campaign

Central to the program is a research-based marketing campaign that realistically and graphically communicates the risks of Meth use. The campaign's core message, "Not Even Once," speaks directly to the highly addictive nature of Meth.

From September 2005 through September 2007, the Meth Project sustained a large-scale, privately funded, statewide prevention campaign spanning TV, radio, billboards, newspapers, and the Internet. This paid campaign included:

- 45,000 TV ads
- 35,000 radio ads
- 10,000 print impressions
- 1,000 billboards

The Meth Project campaign has since received 40 advertising industry awards including:

- 2 Gold Effie Awards
- Grand Effie Award Finalist
- 7 Gold Addy Awards
- 18 Silver Addy Awards
- Cannes Lion Award
- 7 AdCritic.com “Top Ten” Awards for the best ads in the U.S.

The Meth Project has been cited as a model for the nation by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Montana Market Results: 2005-2007

From 2005 to 2007, the rate of teen Meth abuse in the United States remained essentially unchanged.^{iv} In the same period in Montana, Meth use declined – and declined dramatically.^v

As of September 2007:

- Montana ranks #39 in the nation for Meth abuse (down from #5)^{vi}
- Adult Meth use has declined as much as 70%^{vii}
- Meth-related crimes have decreased by 53%^{viii}
- Teen meth use has declined very dramatically

The Attorney General of the State of Montana has provided the following commentary on the results we are seeing in Montana:

“The Meth Project is very simply changing the nature of crime control in Montana. As of 2005, the Montana criminal justice system was overwhelmed by the consequences of Meth. If we are able to continue to make the progress we have seen in the past two years, methamphetamine will have changed from a crisis to a manageable problem.”

We are now replicating the successful Montana Meth Project prevention campaign in Arizona, Idaho, and Illinois with the Arizona Meth Project, the Idaho Meth Project and the Illinois Meth Project. We are in discussions to expand to three additional states in 2008.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Montana has a serious Meth problem that is representative of much of the rest of the country. For the past two years, we have privately financed and executed a rigorous, well-defined, and research-based drug prevention program. This program has its basis in science and has been critiqued by some of the foremost prevention experts in the nation. This effort was financed entirely by the private sector at a cost in excess of \$15 million.

We believe that the Meth Project results in Montana have been more significant than any drug prevention program in history.

I respectfully submit that the people of the United States would be well served if the U.S. Congress would consider providing funding to extend the Meth Project to other states.

For example, if \$40 million were made available annually, we believe we could achieve dramatic reductions in teen methamphetamine use in the 10 states represented by this distinguished committee this morning: Montana, Iowa, Arkansas, New Mexico, Washington, Mississippi, Arizona, Idaho, Kansas, and Nevada.

I commend the Committee for continuing to shed light on this dark issue. It is my hope that we can work together to expand the success that we have seen in Montana to additional states across the nation.

I want to particularly thank Chairman Baucus and his staff for their leadership in helping drive Meth from the state of Montana. I also want to thank Director Walters and the staff of the ONDCP for assisting the Meth Project prevention efforts.

I thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

ⁱ Office of National Drug Control Policy. *Pushing Back Against Meth: A Progress Report on the Fight Against Methamphetamine in the United States*. 2006.

ⁱⁱ Montana Department of Corrections. *Montana Department of Corrections. Biennial Report*. 2007.

ⁱⁱⁱ Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Preliminary Report on Trends and Impact*. January 2007.

^{iv} Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *National Survey on Drug Use and Health*. September 2007.

^v Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Preliminary Report on Trends and Impact*. January 2007.

^{vi} Office of National Drug Control Policy. *Pushing Back Against Meth: A Progress Report on the Fight Against Methamphetamine in the United States*. November 2006.

^{vii} Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath. *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Preliminary Report on Trends and Impact*. January 2007.

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