THE SENATE
LANSING, MICHIGAN

JOHN J. H. SCHWARZ, M.D.
24TH DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 30036
LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909-7536
OFFICE (517) 373-3447
FAX: (517) 373-5845
DISTRICT TOLL FREE (877) 284-4989
DID: (517) 373-0543
E-MAIL: senjohnsw@senate.state.mi.us

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, VICE CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEES:
HIGHER EDUCATION, CHAIRMAN
GENERAL GOVERNMENT, CHAIRMAN
COMMUNITY HEALTH, VICE CHAIRMAN
JOINT CAPITAL OUTLAY
HEALTH POLICY
MICHIGAN CAPITOL COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE RETIREMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Suzann Ruch
517-373-3447

Schwarz Bills to Curb Spread of Methamphetamine Signed Into Law

Oct. 18, 2000 — Two bills introduced by state Senator John J.H. Schwarz, M.D., R-Battle Creek, to halt the increased usage and manufacture of illegal drugs such as methamphetamine have been signed into law by Governor John Engler.

Senate Bill 1043, now Public Act 314 of 2000, increases the penalties for possession, use, manufacture, delivery and possession with intent to deliver the drug methamphetamine. The new law also makes it a crime to operate a clandestine laboratory to manufacture illegal drugs.

"Because of the extremely dangerous and toxic nature of the chemicals used to make this drug, we are concerned about any increase in the number of clandestine methamphetamine labs," Schwarz said. "When a clandestine lab is found, our police and firefighters face great risk of personal injury due to chemical exposure and the fact that these labs are often booby trapped.

"Methamphetamine users also face great risk because this drug is highly addictive and has been known to cause violent, paranoid behavior and other psychological problems."

(more)

Under the new law, people found guilty face up to 10 years imprisonment and $100,000 in fines for operating a clandestine drug lab. Those who violate this law in the presence of a child, near a church, school, residence or business, or who use weapons or booby traps could face an additional 20 to 25 years imprisonment.

The legislation also provides for up to 20 years imprisonment and $100,000 in fines for unlawfully disposing of the hazardous waste created during the manufacturing of methamphetamine.

It is estimated that for each pound of methamphetamine manufactured, there are five to six pounds of toxic waste produced from the lethal and flammable mixture of chemicals used to make the drug. Drug makers often dump this toxic waste on the ground or in local sewer systems.

Senate Bill 1186, which is now Public Act 315 of 2000, amends the state sentencing guidelines to add the felony penalties for operating or maintaining a controlled substance laboratory contained in P.A. 314.

"With reports that methamphetamine use among high school seniors in the United States has doubled in recent years, we need to be proactive in halting the spread of this drug in Michigan," Schwarz said.

-30-