

Special Report

from
State Representative

Phillip Pinion

Weekly Newsletter from Capitol Hill in Nashville
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Contact: Matt Kroplin, Press Secretary, (615) 741-6620

HOUSE ADVANCES ANTI-DRUG LEGISLATION

The Tennessee House of Representatives this week advanced two Anti-Drug Initiatives. HB 191 passed the House on Monday night by a near-unanimous vote and HB 291 has been guided through the committee process and will be voted on Monday.

House Bill 191 makes possession of five or more grams of methamphetamine while operating a motor vehicle a Class B misdemeanor. Under this bill, offenders would lose their licenses and face a five hundred dollar fine. Offenders also face seizure and forfeiture of their vehicles.

It's important that we get these people off the roads. We want to make sure that meth offenders face the same penalties as other drug offenders. If you're using your vehicle to transport drugs, you ought to have it taken away. It is my hope that this new law will discourage vehicles being used to produce meth.

This bill protects the safety of Tennessee's drivers. By revoking the license and taking away the cars of one more type of drug offender, we're taking a common-sense step towards safer roads.

House Bill 291 expands the scope of Tennessee's Drug Free Zones to include secondary schools, preschools, child care agencies, public libraries, recreational centers and parks.

In addition to jail time, HB 291 also provides for a system of fines ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000 for felony convictions in Drug Free Zones.

Drugs are a serious threat to our children. I want to add public places and areas that teach and care for children to our Drug Free Zone program in order to keep Tennessee's children sheltered from the harmful situations that drugs cause.

Often there's other violent behavior going on around drug activity. If we can drive gangs and prostitution and other dangerous behaviors away from our children and public places that families frequently visit, I think we've accomplished something.

If drug users realize that we're serious about protecting our children, maybe they'll stay away from our most vulnerable citizens, and we can break the cycle of drug use that plagues our state.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact me by phone at 1-800-449-8366, ext. 1-0718 or by email at rep.phillip.pinion@legislature.state.tn.us.

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