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Local sheriff credited with inspiring state bill

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Reporter: David E. Demarest

By passing Senate Bill 1050, and House Bill 1071, the Florida Legislature has taken a big step toward stamping out the meth epidemic in the state.

The bill blocks excessive sales of the ingredients used to make methamphetamine, and was the result of an extensive collaboration between Bay County Sheriff Frank McKeithen, the [Office](#) of the Lieutenant Governor, The Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Florida Retail Federation, the National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators, the Consumer Health Products Association and the Florida Office of Drug Control.



Lieutenant Governor Jeff Kottkamp praised the bill's passage, saying "Methamphetamine is one of the most dangerous, destructive, and addictive drugs we have ever seen. Those who manufacture meth put their families and communities at great risk for exposure to dangerous, toxic chemicals and extreme fire hazards. SB 1050 will go a long way in reducing the ability of criminals to acquire the deadly ingredients needed to manufacture this drug in our communities."

A similar MethCheck Ordinance already passed in Bay County; SB 1050 makes state law consistent with a 2006 Federal law called the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act. This Act limits the amount of ephedrine, pseudo-ephedrine ("PSE") and other precursor drugs that can be purchased; puts PSE products behind the counter and requires that retailers log information about people who purchase these drugs. The private-sector will run the electronic sales blocking system envisioned by SB 1050 (MethCheck). FDLE, however, will approve the architecture of the system, thus ensuring state oversight. Currently, over 20,000 stores nationwide-and more than 900 in Florida-are already using this private system with great [success](#).

Furthermore, SB 1050 does not require the State of Florida to pay for the system, because the Consumer Health Products Association - a consortium of manufacturers of pseudo-ephedrine and ephedrine drugs - have committed the resources to pay for the electronic logging system to be implemented statewide- no [cost](#) to the state and no cost to the retailers.