

# Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



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## **Terry Goddard, State Rep. Tom O'Halleran Applaud New Law**

(Phoenix, Ariz. – May 3, 2006) Attorney General Terry Goddard and State Representative Tom O'Halleran championed critical legislation to protect children and vulnerable adults from the dangers of meth labs.

The new law, signed Tuesday by Governor Janet Napolitano, closes a loophole in Arizona's criminal code and will lead to more convictions and harsher punishment for people who manufacture drugs like meth when children or vulnerable adults are present. Goddard and O'Halleran worked to include an amendment to Senate Bill 1427 to ensure this provision was included in final passage.

Under the new law, if a child or vulnerable adult is permitted into a structure or vehicle containing chemicals or equipment used to manufacture dangerous drugs, a defendant does not need "care or custody" of the child or vulnerable adult to be held criminally responsible for endangerment. Toxic poisoning, chemical burns, fires and explosions can occur where meth is produced.

"We must do everything we can to protect the most vulnerable members of our society from exposure to toxic and potentially lethal chemicals used when making meth," Goddard said. "In addition to meth manufacturing charges, this new law will allow prosecutors to charge perpetrators with endangerment when children and vulnerable adults are present during the meth production process."

"Children and vulnerable adults should not pay for the mistakes of others with their health and possibly their lives," O'Halleran said. "A meth cook doesn't have the right to endanger innocent children through criminal and dangerous behavior."

Violation of the new law will lead to felony charges ranging from a class 2 to a class 6 felony.

Goddard and O'Halleran have been leading the fight at the state legislature against the manufacture and use of meth. In addition to SB 1427, they continue to work for legislation to provide resources for meth treatment, educate children on the dangers of meth, stop the flow of meth across our border and make it harder for meth cooks to obtain the chemicals they need to cook meth.

For more information on the Drug Endangered Children Program, please visit the Attorney General's Web site at [www.azag.gov](http://www.azag.gov). To report a meth lab in Arizona, contact your local police department or sheriff's office, or call the meth hotline at 1-877-787-6384 (1-877-STP-METH).

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