

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 27, 2005 LB 117

SENATOR FLOOD: Okay. Thank you, Mr. President. It's been said by a number of folks in here, or by a few, that this bill has been watered down or this is more tame than it should be. I don't want to be misquoted or misunderstood. I'm proud of this bill as amended. I think it's substantive. I know I've talked about Schedule V drugs, and that would be the next step, obviously. But I'm proud of what this does. This is a significant step, thanks to the leadership of Senator Bourne who has really been on the front line working this bill. I appreciate the way it came out and what it does, and this is one of the reasons I appreciate it because we're setting a standard. Law enforcement, when they talk about who they charge and who gets arrested when it comes to meth, they'll mention the word "mules." What's a mule? A mule is a guy that, or a lady, that is out there selling meth for somebody else so that they can further their own habit, and they've got a pretty serious penalty, as you saw this morning, that they face. Mules are also teenage girls that sell their body for sex so that they can get high. Mules are also 16-year-olds that go to the store and buy Sudafed so that they can help their provider of methamphetamine, who happens to be a meth cook, stay in business. It isn't just the meth cook we have to worry about with these meth labs. It's all the people in that circle that rely on the meth cook to give him the materials that they need to make the meth so that they can supply and pay back the mule with the methamphetamine that they produce. That may seem complicated but this isn't a 45-year-old guy living in a Quonset out in the middle of some rural area. This is a guy that makes meth to sell it or provide it for his friends and draws people into that circle. One meth addict hangs out with another meth addict, because the thing they have in common is doing meth. And pretty soon they start to depend and to rely on each other. Why do we want to let...or why do we want to make a 16-year-old attractive to a meth cook so that they can go out and get Sudafed throughout the town or throughout the county or your portion of the state? We don't, so let's take a bold step and say, no, you got to be 18 years old. I don't want a 16-year-old out running around after school, picking up pseudoephedrine tablets so that he or she can take it back to the Quonset, put it in the mix, and make meth. Why even give them an opportunity to put somebody in that position? For that reason, I say no,