

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 11, 2013

For More Information, contact:
Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491
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AG STRANGE LEADS NATIONAL EFFORT ASKING FDA TO MAKE GENERIC PAIN PILLS HARDER TO ABUSE

(MONTGOMERY) – Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange is leading an effort to make generic pain medicines more resistant to abuse. Attorney General Strange, along with North Carolina Attorney General Roy Cooper, co-sponsored a letter sent today to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration that was also signed by 46 other state and territorial attorneys general.

The Attorneys General are urging the FDA to adopt standards requiring manufacturers and marketers of generic prescription painkillers to develop tamper- and abuse-resistant versions of their products.

“Adding new physical and chemical features to prescription opioids to deter abuse could reduce misuse of these drugs and the sometimes deadly consequences. These products can be part of a comprehensive approach which should include prevention, interdiction, prosecution and substance-abuse treatment,” the letter states.

Prescription drug abuse is on the rise across the country, and prescription pain relievers are among the most commonly abused drugs. Name-brand versions of painkillers such as OxyContin have taken steps to make it more difficult to abuse their drugs, for example by making it harder to crush pills which abusers do in order to inject or snort the drug.

“In our states, nonmedical users are shifting away from the new tamper-resistant formulations to non-tamper-resistant formulations of other opioids as well as to illegal drugs. There is great concern in our law enforcement community that many non-tamper-resistant products are available for abuse when only a few products have been formulated with tamper-resistant features,” the attorneys general wrote in their letter to the FDA.

When abused or used incorrectly, prescription drugs can be deadly. Fatal drug overdoses are now the leading cause of death due to unintentional injury in the United States exceeding even motor vehicle deaths, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Attorneys general from the following states and territories signed onto the letter: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

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501 Washington Avenue • Montgomery, AL 36104 • (334) 242-7300
www.ago.state.al.us

