



**Testimony
Connecticut General Assembly Public Health Committee Hearing
February 29, 2008
HB 5037**

**Submitted by
Jim Watkins
Director, State Government Affairs
Wyeth**

Chairman Handley, Chairman Sayers and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit formal testimony in support of H.B. 5037. I am Jim Watkins, Director of State Government Affairs for Wyeth. We are a global pharmaceutical, consumer healthcare and animal health company with manufacturing facilities on four continents, selling products in more than 145 countries and employing 50,000 employees worldwide.

The issue we face today is how to deal with the serious public health and societal problems caused by the illegal production of methamphetamine while protecting the millions of Americans who legitimately use over-the-counter medications to relieve cold and allergy symptoms.

Simply put, how do we balance access to legitimate over-the-counter treatments for the more than 211 million people who buy cough, cold, flu and allergy medicines each year and closer to home, 3 million Connecticutans, with our desire to curb the illegal manufacture of methamphetamine?



While we, as manufacturers, cannot control the actions of a few people who abuse these products, we are committed to helping develop real solutions to this problem while protecting consumers who legitimately use our products to alleviate cold and allergy symptoms.

Wyeth believes that restrictions on pseudoephedrine products must strike a balance between deterring criminals and consumer access to safe, effective, FDA-approved over the counter products for legitimate use.

The federal Combat Methamphetamine Act, signed into law on March 6, 2006, strikes this balance. In fact, during September 2007 testimony before the U.S. Congress, the United States Drug Enforcement Agency testified that the law has contributed to a forty percent reduction in clandestine meth labs across the United States.

We support H.B. 5037, which strives to comport with federal law. In addition, the bill addresses consequences and incentives that will hopefully change behavior among those who illegally use, purchase and manufacture methamphetamine.

We believe H.B. 5037 includes the fundamental tenants to curbing the methamphetamine problem. It strikes a balance between enabling consumer access, while providing real solutions to the meth issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.



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