

House Bill 588

By: Representatives Clark of the 101<sup>st</sup>, Cooper of the 43<sup>rd</sup>, Broadrick of the 4<sup>th</sup>, Kidd of the 145<sup>th</sup>, Rynders of the 152<sup>nd</sup>, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 2 of Chapter 13 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to regulation of controlled substances, so as to change provisions relating to  
3 possession of substances containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, and phenylpropanolamine  
4 and restrictions on sales of products containing pseudoephedrine; to provide for real-time  
5 tracking of sales of products containing ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine,  
6 and phenylpropanolamine; to provide for definitions; to revise provisions relating to  
7 exceptions; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Article 2 of Chapter 13 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
11 regulation of controlled substances, is amended by revising Code Section 16-13-30.3,  
12 relating to possession of substances containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, and  
13 phenylpropanolamine and restrictions on sales of products containing pseudoephedrine, as  
14 follows:

15 "16-13-30.3.

16 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

17 (1) 'Ephedrine,' 'norpseudoephedrine,' 'pseudoephedrine,' or 'phenylpropanolamine'  
18 means any drug product containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine  
19 base, or any of their salts, isomers, or salts of isomers, alone or in a mixture.

20 (2) 'Georgia Meth Watch' means the program entitled Georgia Meth Watch or similar  
21 program which has been promulgated, approved, and distributed by the Georgia Council  
22 on Substance Abuse.

23 (3) 'NADDI' means the National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators.

24 (4) 'Real-time electronic logging system' means an electronic system approved by the  
25 Georgia Bureau of Investigation which is operated in real time and which can track  
26 required information and generate a stop sale alert to notify a retail distributor that a

27 purchase of ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine  
 28 which exceeds the quantity limits set forth in this Code section is being attempted. Such  
 29 system shall:

30 (A) Contain an override function that will not only allow a retail distributor to  
 31 complete a sale in violation of this Code section when the person making the sale is in  
 32 reasonable fear of imminent bodily harm if he or she does not complete the sale but also  
 33 will track any override sales made;

34 (B) Be offered free of charge to the state, retail distributors, and law enforcement  
 35 agencies; and

36 (C) Have real-time interstate communicability with similar systems in other states.

37 ~~(2) 'Personal use' means the sale in a single transaction to an individual customer for a~~  
 38 ~~legitimate medical use of a product containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or~~  
 39 ~~phenylpropanolamine in quantities at or below that specified in subsection (b) of this~~  
 40 ~~Code section, and includes the sale of those products to employers to be dispensed to~~  
 41 ~~employees from first-aid kits or medicine chests.~~

42 (5) 'Required information' means the full name and address of the purchaser; the type of  
 43 government issued photographic identification presented, including the issuer and  
 44 identification number; a description of the nonprescription product purchased which  
 45 contains ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine base,  
 46 including the number of grams of pseudoephedrine in the product; and the date and time  
 47 of the purchase.

48 ~~(3)~~(6) 'Retail distributor' means a grocery store, general merchandise store, drugstore,  
 49 convenience store, or other related entity, the activities of which involve the distribution  
 50 of products containing ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or  
 51 phenylpropanolamine ~~products~~.

52 (b)(1) It is shall be unlawful for any person, other than a person or entity described in  
 53 paragraph (28), (29), or (33) of Code Section 26-4-5 or a retail distributor, to knowingly  
 54 possess any product that contains ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or  
 55 phenylpropanolamine base in an amount which exceeds 300 pills, tablets, gelcaps,  
 56 capsules, or other individual units or more than 9 grams of ephedrine,  
 57 norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine base, ~~their salts, isomers,~~  
 58 ~~or salts of isomers~~, or a combination of any of these substances, whichever is smaller.

59 (2) It shall be unlawful for any person to possess any ~~amount of a substance set forth in~~  
 60 ~~this Code section~~ product containing ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine,  
 61 or phenylpropanolamine base with the intent to manufacture amphetamine or  
 62 methamphetamine.

63 (3) Any person who violates the provisions of this Code section shall be guilty of a  
64 felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than  
65 one year nor more than ten years.

66 ~~(b.1)(c)~~(1) Products whose sole active ingredient is pseudoephedrine may be offered for  
67 retail sale only if sold in blister packaging. Such products ~~may~~ shall not be offered for  
68 retail sale by self-service but shall only be offered for retail sale from behind a counter  
69 or other barrier so that such products are not directly accessible by the public ~~but~~ and only  
70 by ~~a retail store~~ an employee or agent of a retail distributor.

71 (2) Retail distributors shall require every retail purchaser of a product containing  
72 pseudoephedrine to furnish valid government issued photographic identification of the  
73 purchaser. The retail distributor shall maintain a record of required information for each  
74 sale of a nonprescription product which contains ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine,  
75 pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine base. Retail distributors shall require that  
76 every purchaser sign a written or electronic log attesting to the validity of the required  
77 information.

78 (3) Retail distributors shall maintain a record of required information for a period of two  
79 years from the date of each transaction. Except as authorized by paragraph (6) of this  
80 subsection, the records maintained by a retail distributor pursuant to this Code section  
81 shall not be disclosed. Retail distributors may destroy the required information collected  
82 pursuant to this subsection after two years from the date of the transaction.

83 (4)(A) On and after January 1, 2016, retail distributors shall, before completing a sale  
84 of a nonprescription product which contains ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine,  
85 pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine base, electronically track all such sales and  
86 submit the required information to a real-time electronic logging system. A retail  
87 distributor shall not complete the sale of a nonprescription product which contains  
88 ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine base if the  
89 real-time electronic logging system generates a stop sale alert except as provided in  
90 subparagraph (a)(4)(A) of this Code section.

91 (B) Absent negligence, wantonness, recklessness, or deliberate misconduct, any retail  
92 distributor utilizing the real-time electronic logging system in accordance with this  
93 paragraph shall not be civilly liable as a result of any act or omission in carrying out the  
94 duties required by this paragraph and shall be immune from liability to any third party  
95 unless the retail distributor has violated any provision of this paragraph in relation to  
96 a claim brought for such violation.

97 (5) If a retail distributor selling a nonprescription product which contains ephedrine,  
98 norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine base experiences  
99 mechanical or electronic failure of the real-time electronic logging system and is unable

100 to comply with the electronic sales tracking requirement, the retail distributor shall  
 101 maintain a written log or an alternative electronic recording mechanism until such time  
 102 as the retail distributor is able to comply with the electronic sales tracking requirement.

103 (6) Provided that the Georgia Bureau of Investigation executes a memorandum of  
 104 understanding with NADDI governing access to Georgia transaction records, NADDI  
 105 shall forward such records to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation weekly and provide  
 106 real-time access to such records through an online portal to law enforcement agencies in  
 107 this state as authorized by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

108 ~~(2)(7)~~ No person shall deliver in any single over the counter sale more than three  
 109 packages of any product containing pseudoephedrine as the sole active ingredient or in  
 110 combination with other active ingredients or any number of packages that contain a  
 111 combined total of more than nine grams of pseudoephedrine or its base, salts, optical  
 112 isomers, or salts of its optical isomers distribute or purchase any nonprescription product  
 113 containing more than 3.6 grams of ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or  
 114 phenylpropanolamine base per day in dosage form or more than 9 grams of ephedrine,  
 115 norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine base per 30 day period  
 116 in dosage form of any product. The limits set forth in this paragraph shall apply to the  
 117 total amount of ephedrine, norpseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or  
 118 phenylpropanolamine base contained in the product and not the overall weight of such  
 119 product.

120 ~~(3)(8)~~ It shall be unlawful for a retail distributor to purchase any product containing  
 121 pseudoephedrine from any person or entity other than a manufacturer or a wholesale  
 122 distributor licensed by the State Board of Pharmacy.

123 ~~(4)~~ This subsection shall not apply to:

124 ~~(A) Pediatric products labeled pursuant to federal regulation as primarily intended for~~  
 125 ~~administration to children under 12 years of age according to label instructions; and~~

126 ~~(B) Products that the State Board of Pharmacy, upon application of a manufacturer,~~  
 127 ~~exempts because the product is formulated in such a way as to effectively prevent the~~  
 128 ~~conversion of the active ingredient into methamphetamine or its salts or precursors.~~

129 ~~(5)(9)~~ This subsection shall preempt all local ordinances or regulations governing the  
 130 retail sale of ~~over the counter~~ products containing pseudoephedrine by a retail ~~business~~  
 131 ~~distributor~~ except such local ordinances or regulations that existed on or before December  
 132 31, 2004. Effective January 1, 2006, this subsection shall preempt all local ordinances.

133 ~~(6)(10)(A)~~ Except as otherwise provided herein in subsections (b) and (e) of this Code  
 134 section, it shall be unlawful for any person knowingly to violate any prohibition  
 135 contained in paragraph (1), (2), ~~or~~ (3), (4), (7), or (8) of this subsection.

136 (B) Any person convicted of a violation of paragraph (1), ~~or (2), (3), (4), or (7)~~ of this  
 137 subsection shall be guilty of a misdemeanor which, upon the first conviction, shall be  
 138 punished by a fine of not more than \$500.00 and, upon the second or subsequent  
 139 conviction, shall be punished by not more than six months' imprisonment or a fine of  
 140 not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

141 (C) Any person convicted of a violation of paragraph ~~(3)~~ (8) of this subsection shall,  
 142 upon the first conviction, be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon the second or  
 143 subsequent conviction, be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.

144 (D) It shall be a defense to a prosecution of a retail ~~business or owner or operator~~  
 145 ~~thereof~~ distributor for violation of paragraph (1), ~~or (2), (3), (4), (7), or (8)~~ of this  
 146 subsection that, at the time of the alleged violation, all of the employees of the retail  
 147 ~~business~~ distributor had completed training complying with standards established under  
 148 Georgia Meth Watch; as such standards existed on June 30, 2015, and the retail  
 149 ~~business~~ distributor was in compliance with procedures established by Georgia Meth  
 150 Watch, and the defendant did not knowingly, willfully, or intentionally violate  
 151 paragraph (1) or (2) of this subsection. For purposes of this subsection only, the term  
 152 'Georgia Meth Watch' shall mean that program entitled 'Georgia Meth Watch' or similar  
 153 program which has been promulgated, approved, and distributed by the Georgia  
 154 Council on Substance Abuse as such standards existed on June 30, 2015.

155 ~~(7) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the State Board of Pharmacy may~~  
 156 ~~adopt reasonable rules and regulations to effectuate the provisions of this subsection. The~~  
 157 ~~board is further authorized to charge reasonable fees to defray expenses incurred in~~  
 158 ~~maintaining any records or forms necessitated by this subsection or otherwise~~  
 159 ~~administering any other provisions of this subsection.~~

160 ~~(e)~~(d) This Code section shall not apply to:

161 (1) ~~Pediatric products primarily intended for administration to children under 12 years~~  
 162 ~~of age, according to label instructions, either:~~

163 (A) ~~In solid dosage form whose recommended dosage, according to label instructions,~~  
 164 ~~does not exceed 15 milligrams of ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine~~  
 165 ~~per individual dosage unit; or~~

166 (B) ~~In liquid form whose recommended dosage, according to label instructions, does~~  
 167 ~~not exceed 15 milligrams of ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine per~~  
 168 ~~five milliliters of liquid product;~~

169 (2) ~~Pediatric liquid products primarily intended for administration to children under two~~  
 170 ~~years of age for which the recommended dosage does not exceed two milliliters and the~~  
 171 ~~total package content does not exceed one fluid ounce; or~~

172 ~~(3) Products~~ products that the State Board of Pharmacy, upon application of a  
173 manufacturer, exempts by rule from this Code section because the product has been  
174 formulated in such a way as to prevent effectively the conversion of the active ingredient  
175 into methamphetamine or its salts or precursors.

176 ~~(d)~~(e) Except as authorized by this article, it is unlawful for any person to possess, have  
177 under his or her control, manufacture, deliver, distribute, dispense, administer, purchase,  
178 sell, or possess with intent to distribute any ~~substance~~ product containing any amounts of  
179 ephedrine, ~~nor~~pseudoephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine base, ~~or any~~  
180 ~~of their salts, optical isomers, or salts of optical isomers~~ which have been altered from their  
181 original condition so as to be powdered, liquefied, or crushed. This subsection shall not  
182 apply to any of the substances identified within this subsection which are possessed or  
183 altered for a legitimate medical purpose. Any person who violates this subsection shall be  
184 guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not  
185 less than one year nor more than ten years."

186 **SECTION 2.**

187 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.