



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

**REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT**

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Cong. Kind Acts to Clean Up Meth Labs in Western Wisconsin

Washington, DC – New legislation cosponsored by Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) will help communities in western Wisconsin clean up methamphetamine labs and the toxic mess they leave behind.

Today, Rep. Kind and a bipartisan majority in the House voted to support to H.R. 365, a bill that charges the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with the development of health-based guidelines to assist state and local authorities in cleaning up former meth lab sites.

“As a former special prosecutor in western Wisconsin, I know just how devastating the spread of meth can be to a community,” Rep. Kind said. “And meth labs are often found where you’d least expect them – in residential areas, houses, apartments, or even hotel rooms. The chemicals used in making meth are highly volatile, often causing disastrous fires or explosions. And even after the labs are shut down, the toxic residue and fumes left behind pose significant health and environmental risks.”

Under this bill, the EPA will establish a program for research on the residues left from the production of methamphetamines, and will work with state and local officials to ensure all levels of government are aware of and using best practices for meth lab recovery and remediation.

“Law enforcement agencies in western Wisconsin are working together to combat this problem,” Rep. Kind said. “And this bill will establish guidelines and best practices for them in cleaning up these sites, protecting the health and safety of our families, and preventing hazardous chemicals from polluting the environment.”

In addition to establishing those guidelines, the bill also:

- Directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology to work with EPA to develop technologies to detect meth labs, emphasizing in-field test kits for law enforcement.
- Require the National Academy of Sciences to study the long-term health impacts of meth exposure on first-responders and on children taken from meth lab sites.

Between 2003 and 2005, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) reported more than 230 methamphetamine incidents in Wisconsin. Although these numbers are decreasing, methamphetamine is still an issue in western Wisconsin, seeping into rural communities from Minnesota and Iowa.

The legislation is supported by communities and law enforcement agencies across the country, including the National Association of Counties and the National Sheriffs Association