



Tommy
Williams

Texas Senator

TOMMY PROPOSES ANTIDOTE FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE & PILL MILLS

*Legislative Package Fights Prescription Drug Abuse
and Regulates Pain Management Clinics*

Prescription drug abuse is a deadly problem crossing all age groups, races and income levels — and right now, it's a **BIG problem in Texas!**

We know too well the problems associated with illicit drugs like marijuana, cocaine and heroin. However, law enforcement now reports prescription drug abuse is our fastest growing narcotics problem.

Today, more Texans are dying from the overdose of prescription drugs than from crack cocaine and methamphetamine combined.

I became confronted with this issue in early 2007 when a constituent shared their sad and personal experience about their son who received prescription medications from several clinics and tragically overdosed from a lethal pill combination. I soon began hearing of similar tragedies from other families, and learning our law enforcement had few tools to fight the problem.

In addition to our lack of enforcement laws, the State of Louisiana passed restrictive legislation dealing with access to prescription drugs. Louisiana's actions resulted in a growing number of people crossing into Texas to take advantage of our state's inadequate laws.

Law enforcement, doctors and pharmacists agree we need laws **NOW** to fight the operation of illegitimate pain clinics, (many times referred to as "pill mills"). They also want to regulate pain management clinics and those who own and operate them, and establish penalties for patients who visit or "shop " multiple practitioners to obtain large quantities of prescriptive drugs for personal and re-sale usage.

That's why I've authored Senate Bills 911, 912, and 1281. Under SB 1281, stricter criminal penalties would be created for patients who visit multiple practitioners and don't disclose the receipt of additional controlled substances from other sources. In other words, a person would be committing a criminal offense if they **intentionally obtained** controlled substances by using misrepresentation, fraud, forgery, deception, subterfuge, or concealment of a material fact.

SB 911 requires pain management clinics to be certified by the Texas Medical Board and gives them the needed tools to investigate and regulate these clinics. The clinics would also be required to be owned and operated by a licensed physician.

SB 912 creates an offense if an individual by nature of their profession or employment diverts prescription drugs for personal use or the use of another. The Texas Department of Public Safety has informed me that much of the prescription drugs from the black market are stolen by the very people who are employed in doctors' offices and pharmacies.

This legislative package will increase pain management clinic accountability, and will significantly reduce the accessibility of "pill mills" to individuals who intentionally abuse controlled substances.

I want to protect patient access to legitimate pain treatment, so it's important we safeguard prescription drugs to ONLY those who really need them.

Under current laws too many are dying from overdosing on prescribed drugs. **I believe it's time we work to save more lives. I hope you agree.**


Tommy