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Ryan Signs Kelley's Law; Toughens Penalties for Ecstasy and other Drugs

SPRINGFIELD -- Governor George H. Ryan today signed into law HB 126, also known as Kelley's Law. Kelley's Law strengthens penalties for selling ecstasy and other so called "club-drugs" and expands the offenses of drug-induced homicide and drug-induced infliction of great bodily harm to include the unlawful delivery of any controlled substances.

"This bill strengthens the penalties for people who give drugs to our kids," Governor Ryan said. "It's one that is overdue, and one that I hope will serve notice to dealers, that you will be punished severely if you hurt children with your drugs."

HB 126 provides that the offenses of drug-induced homicide and drug-induced infliction of great bodily harm includes the unlawful delivery of any controlled substance, rather than specifically listed controlled substances.

Kelley's Law also places ecstasy and other related "club drugs" into the same category as the most serious drugs such as; cocaine, heroin, morphine, methamphetamine and LSD. Currently the penalties for unlawful delivery or possession of ecstasy and the others is much lower, which may contribute to their popularity.

"We've seen problems caused by teenagers and others experimenting with ecstasy increase," Governor Ryan said. "It is a dangerous drug that kills and we are sending both a warning and a message by toughening the penalties for selling and distributing ecstasy."

"DuPage County State's Attorney Joe Birkett and his staff should be commended for their extraordinary effort in passing this tough new law designed to protect our children," House Republican Leader Lee A.

Daniels said. "Now that Governor Ryan has signed this bill, our law enforcement officials finally have the wherewithal to put ecstasy pushers behind bars."

HB 126, which becomes effective January 1, 2002, was named after Kelley Baker, who died in November of 1999 at the age of 23 of an ecstasy overdose. Her mother, Kate Patton, has been instrumental in the passage of this law and has since started the Kelley McEnery Baker Foundation for the prevention, education and awareness of ecstasy.

House Sponsors of HB 126 include Minority Leader Lee Daniels, R-Elmhurst; Representatives Tom Cross, R-Oswego; William O'Connor, R-Riverside; Renee Kosel, R-New Lenox and Suzie Bassi, R-Palatine. Senate Sponsors include Senators Kirk Dillard, R-Hinsdale and J. Bradley Burzynski, R-Sycamore.