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Press Release - Senator Edmund S. Muskie Announces New Narcotics Bill

Edmund S. Muskie

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WASHINGTON --

Senator Edmund S. Muskie (D-Me.) released the following statement today in announcing he would co-sponsor the Administration's legislation to create a new office in the Executive Office of the President to co-ordinate drug abuse treatment programs.

* * *

"I have decided to co-sponsor the President's bill which would create a Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention within the Executive Office of the President.

"The President's bill is similar in many respects to The Intergovernmental Drug Abuse Control Co-ordination Act (S.1945), which I introduced in the Senate three weeks ago and which has been introduced in the House by Representative James H. Scheuer (D-NY). Indeed, the similarities between the two bills are striking.

"The Muskie-Scheuer bill would create an Office of Drug Abuse Control within the Executive Office of the President with the power to co-ordinate all Federal, State and local programs to control drug abuse, including law enforcement, treatment, education and prevention, and research programs.

"In some ways, I believe the President's bill falls short of the Muskie-Scheuer bill. It would not, for example, give the Director of the new Anti-Drug Office the power to co-ordinate our vital law enforcement efforts against drug traffic as would the Muskie-Scheuer bill. I view this as a significant difference between the two bills because controlling drug abuse requires a co-ordinated effort of effective law enforcement, effective treatment and effective anti-drug education.

"Nevertheless, I am pleased that the President's proposal has embodied many of the provisions in the Muskie-Scheuer bill. I expect that the Congress will act expeditiously in considering both the Muskie-Scheuer bill and the President's bill.

"The Congress has consistently been out front in the war against drug abuse in this nation. Last year the Congress over the Administration's opposition authorized more than \$100 million for drug treatment and education for the next fiscal year. I am pleased that the President has decided to reverse his earlier decision to request only one-fourth of that money. I applaud the President's decision to follow-up the Congressional initiatives and seek more money for drug treatment and education programs.

"Controlling drug abuse is no easy matter. It will require a bipartisan effort in the Congress and cooperation between the executive and legislative branches of government.

"Congress and the President working together can make an impact on the drug problem."

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