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AG Schmidt asks petroleum companies to eliminate synthetic drugs from retail stores

TOPEKA – (February 11, 2015) – Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt and 42 other state and territorial attorneys general today asked nine petroleum companies to collaborate with their franchisees to eliminate synthetic drugs from retail locations operating under their brand names, including gas stations and convenience stores.

Synthetic drugs are chemical alternatives to cocaine, marijuana and methamphetamine. They are illegal and are often just as dangerous, if not more so, than the substances they mimic. Manufacturers of synthetic drugs seek to evade state and federal law by creating chemical compounds not yet specifically regulated or prohibited in the United States. In recent years, State and federal law enforcement authorities have cracked down on synthetic drug sales in Kansas, including products commonly known as "K2" and synthetic marijuana.

"Synthetic drugs are a dangerous and illegal attempt to use chemistry to stay one step ahead of the law," Schmidt said. "They should not be given the cloak of legitimacy or safety by well-known brand name stores. Young Kansans are particularly vulnerable to marketing of these harmful products, which is why we are asking these reputable companies to make sure these products are not being sold on their shelves."

In the letter sent to British Petroleum, Chevron Corporation, Citgo Petroleum Corporation, Exxon Mobil Corporation, Marathon Petroleum Corporation, Phillips 66, Shell Oil Company, Sunoco, and Valero Energy Corporation, the 43 attorneys general expressed concern that gas stations and convenience stores operating under brand names of reputable oil companies are selling illegal and extremely dangerous synthetic drugs, such as K2. The group urged the oil companies to enact stronger policies against the sale of synthetic drugs in retail locations to protect the public, particularly young people.

Attorneys general from the following states and territories signed onto the letter: Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

A copy of the attorneys' general letter can be found at: <http://1.usa.gov/1zILuzj>

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