

to controlled substances. There is a real opportunity for the DEA as it establishes and monitors quota applications for the ordering and procurement, manufacture, import and export permitting, disbursement, and destruction of controlled substances. The opportunity is to utilize real-time supply chain tracking technology to monitor the movement of controlled substances. This way, the DEA will be able to identify the perpetrators of diversion and the illegal disbursement of controlled substances. We should also be grateful to the professionals at the DEA for their service in protecting the public from misuse of controlled substances!

### **State Boards of Pharmacy**

The state boards of pharmacy protect public health through the licensing of pharmacists and their pharmacist competence assessment programs. The basic premise is that pharmacists serve as health care professionals, providing patient care through the patients’ medications as prescribed by a licensed physician. It is up to the state regulatory agencies to enforce minimum standards of care.

During my research for this book I worked with five state boards of pharmacy. All five have dedicated professionals that are “all in” to protect public health and ensure the availability of needed pharmaceutical drugs (compounded ones included) to patients in need. They are also all in to protect the public from the abuse of pharmaceutical drugs, and support regulations that make it difficult for the bad guys to get drugs illegally. However, everyone I spoke with is concerned and worried that excess regulations may impede the flow of legal drugs to patients in need and with prescriptions.

### **State Departments of Public Safety**

Once the laws are made by the states and the U.S. Congress, it is up to the enforcement agencies and the states to enforce them. Regarding controlled substances, the DEA has the authority to enforce the controlled substances laws and regulations. However, as we stated, it only has 5,000 special agents to work the 14+ pages of controlled substances. The state law enforcement agencies, largely through the state departments of public safety, augment the DEA in enforcing the controlled substances laws and regulations. They primarily do this by providing personal and financial protection to the citizens in their respective states through the