On his office phone at L & S Pharmacy, Richard Logan listened as a doctor’s office detailed how a patient had just left with her third prescription for painkillers in only nine days — and was quite possibly getting more, illegally, elsewhere.

Mr. Logan, 61, holstered two guns, slipped on a bulletproof vest and jumped into his truck. Because in his small corner of America’s epidemic of prescription drug abuse, Mr. Logan is no ordinary pharmacist. He is also a sheriff’s deputy who, when alerted to someone acquiring fraudulent drug prescriptions, goes out to catch that person himself.

“I’m only one guy, and for every person we get to, there are probably 100 who we can’t,” Mr. Logan said. “How many people have to get addicted and die for us to do what everyone else is doing about it?”

His frustration stems from this: Missouri is the only state in America that has declined to keep a prescription drug database — the primary tool the other 49 states use to identify people who acquire excess prescriptions for addictive painkillers and tranquilizers, as well as the physicians who overprescribe them.

Battle over prescription drug monitoring renewed for 2016 Missouri legislative session *St. Louis Public Radio*, December 17, 2015
Dueling versions of legislation would each create a prescription drug monitoring program in Missouri, the only state that doesn’t have one.

Rep. Holly Rehder, R-Sikeston, pre-filed the House version of the bill Thursday, which would give doctors and pharmacists easy access to recent drug purchases by patients as a way to combat doctor shopping.

On the other end of the spectrum is Sen. Rob Schaaf, R-St. Joseph, who has long opposed efforts to create a prescription monitoring program. He says Rehder’s bill would allow too much access to patient records and violate their privacy.

California health care providers will soon be using a faster and more secure database aimed at combating drug abuse. State Atty. Gen. Kamala Harris and the California Department of Consumer Affairs announced Tuesday that providers who log in with secure Web browsers starting Jan. 8 will be using the new version of the Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System, known as CURES 2.0. The system is designed to prevent overdoses and illegal sales of prescription drugs.

McCaskill says Missouri needs tighter drug monitoring *Associated Press*, January 19, 2016
U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill said Tuesday that Missouri needs more tools to fight opiate abuse, including a prescription drug monitoring program, more specialized treatment centers and better research about average drug use.

Missouri is the only state without a prescription drug monitoring program. State lawmakers have resisted enacting such
a program for more than a decade because of worries about the security of a government database with medical information.

"Missourians ought to talk to the other 49 states that have done this. We've heard no outcry of violations of privacy," McCaskill said. "We're the outlier here.

Other states harmed by Missouri's lack of drug monitoring; pressure shifts to local governments St. Louis Public Radio, May 23, 2016
Missouri's failure to set up a statewide prescription drug monitoring program during the 2016 legislative session will continue to affect other states.

Each of the eight states bordering Missouri already has a program that notifies doctors when their patients have been prescribed dangerous amounts of addictive painkillers from multiple providers. Rep. Holly Rehder, R-Sikeston, says without a program of its own, Missouri is negatively affecting the efforts of others to stop drug dealers and prevent addiction.

Change in drug-monitoring provision a possible sticking point in passing opioid bill Modern Healthcare, July 6, 2016
Opposition to a requirement making it obligatory for providers to review prescription drug monitoring programs before prescribing opioids could snag efforts to pass comprehensive legislation to combat the opioid abuse epidemic.

DOJ awards $8.8 million to strengthen drug-monitoring databases Modern Healthcare, September 26, 2016
Physicians, pharmacists and in some states, police, will have access to new or enhanced, state-wide prescription drug databases that will be funded by $8.8 million in new grants from the U.S. Department of Justice. The grants will go to 20 agencies in 19 states, including Alabama, Kentucky, Ohio, South Dakota, Florida and Utah.