

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF STATE DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

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The National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies (NASDEA) has been in existence since 1975. Its member agencies are State level drug enforcement agencies from the nation's state police, highway patrol, or from the state agency responsible for state-wide criminal investigations. The working members of NASDEA come from command level staff representing these agencies, and all 50 states are represented within NASDEA.

Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program

The National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies wholeheartedly supports a multi-faceted approach in combating the war on drugs. A strategy that encompasses early education, innovative treatment, and vigorous enforcement has long been recognized as the most effective approach to attacking this threat to our citizens.

As a professional law enforcement organization with nationwide membership, we recognize that drug abuse and the related crimes that are intertwined constitute a very real threat to our nation and its citizens. Along with that recognition, we also realize that the successes we have had at the state level have been largely due to the programs that are funded either totally, or in some manner by the Edward Byrne Memorial Grant Program that is now a part of the Justice Assistance Grant Program.

Projects and task forces funded with Byrne/JAG funds have historically been the most effective in that multi-faceted approach due mainly to the coordination that occurs at the state, local, and tribal level within these projects. This is particularly true in non-urban areas of the country where the work is being done at that grass roots level where crime and criminal organizations are identified and can be disrupted or dismantled.

Byrne/JAG funding has been under continuous scrutiny and pressure for reduction since FY 2003 and in fact was targeted to be eliminated in FY's 05, 06, 07, and now once again in FY 2008 has been drastically reduced by \$350 million that translates into a 67% cut across the board.

This reduction in funding is in direct contradiction to the messages given out by BJA and other administration officials. A spending reduction of this magnitude will effectively cripple many local jurisdictions and their task forces. Citizens have come to expect and deservedly so the services they are currently receiving from Byrne/JAG funded task forces.

Therefore, NASDEA urges Congress and the Administration to return Byrne/JAG funding to its 2007 level and reallocate the \$350 million that has been removed.