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NEWS RELEASE

One-Day Drug Operation Nets 4,220 Arrests Nationwide

For Immediate Release

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The National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies (NASDEA) in partnership with the National Narcotics Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC) today announces the arrests of 4,220 individuals on drug-related charges following a national one-day operation conducted by 41 states. The operation, called *Operation Byrne Blitz* was a coordinated effort led by NASDEA to focus on drug related crimes and to stress the importance of the federally funded Byrne Justice Assistance Grant program.

The operation yielded 4,220 arrests and the seizure of 20,851 pounds of marijuana, 2,886 marijuana plants, 1,749 pounds of cocaine, 120 pounds of methamphetamine, 6,973 pharmaceutical pills, 13,244 ecstasy pills and a variety of other drugs. Also seized were 105 methamphetamine labs, 666 firearms and \$13,463,832.00 in U.S. Currency. In addition, 228 children were determined to be endangered and those cases were referred to the appropriate child protection agency.

“As this year’s president of NASDEA, I am very pleased and appreciative of the number of states that participated in this national effort,” said NASDEA President Larry Turner, Commander of the Criminal Investigation Division for the Indiana State Police. The number of arrests, seizures, and illegal drugs confiscated highlight what the nations drug enforcement officers face every day.

State police and highway patrol agencies, local police, sheriff’s departments, and drug task forces throughout the nation collectively conducted undercover investigations, search warrants, consent searches, drug interdiction and arrests warrants for this one-day operation.

All of the task forces that participated in this one day operation are funded and supported through the Byrne Jag program. The Byrne Jag program has been in existence for twenty years and is named after Edward Byrne, a New York City narcotics officer killed in the line of duty by organized drug traffickers. In his honor, the United States Congress appropriates money to the Bureau of Justice Assistance in the Department of Justice to support this program. Unfortunately, over the past few years this program has been the subject of continuing budget cuts. It is the only source of federal funding for multi-jurisdictional task forces to fight and prosecute drug-related and violent crime. The funding is also allocated for many drug treatment programs, crime prevention programs and drug courts across the country. "This funding is critical to every single state in the country, from Maine to Florida, Maryland to California" said Ron Brooks, President of the National Narcotics Officers Association Coalition.

The Byrne Jag program has again this year been the victim of massive funding cuts. The program was funded at 520 million dollars in Fiscal Year 2007 and decreased by 67% to 170 million dollars with the passage of FY 2008 omnibus appropriations bill in December.

"As a national organization, NASDEA has joined with over 26 other national associations including the National Narcotics Officers Association Coalition, National Association of Attorney's General and the International Chief's of Police to name a few, to strongly urge Congress to restore the funding level to this very vital program," said Turner.

NASDEA was formed in 1975 to provide a forum for state drug enforcement executives to exchange information, concepts, techniques and management objectives unique to their area of law enforcement. NASDEA also serves as a collective voice for state level drug enforcement in providing input for the development of national drug strategies and programs.

For more information, please contact your state representative listed on the NASDEA Web site, www.nasdea.org