

6/28/2006 Moran Successfully Fights for Funding to Combat Methamphetamine

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\$50 Million Restored to Important Law Enforcement Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced success in restoring funding to the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grants (Byrne-JAG) Program that provides Kansas drug and law enforcement officers with the resources and technologies needed to combat methamphetamine production, trafficking and use. Funding for this program has been significantly reduced in recent years and is falling short of what is needed by state and local drug and law enforcement officers.

"In many rural areas like Kansas, meth has become the leading drug problem and the addiction is spreading," Moran said during House debate. "We have made significant gains fighting meth that should not be jeopardized by choking off funds for this program. The reduction is leaving local law enforcement defenseless against the meth epidemic. Stopping this dangerous drug must be a priority and this amendment helps make it one for our country."

Moran and a bipartisan group of lawmakers yesterday sponsored an amendment to the 2007 Department of Justice (DOJ) spending bill to restore \$50 million to Byrne-JAG, in addition to a previously passed \$25 million increase. The Byrne-JAG Program is one of the most important tools state and local law enforcement agencies have in fostering intergovernmental cooperation to control the meth problem. With the assistance of these funds, last year Kansas law enforcement seized 390 meth labs. Byrne-JAG also helps fund programs such as the Kansas Methamphetamine Prevention Project (KMPP). Since 2002, KMPP has trained more than 18,000 Kansans to identify and prevent meth abuse and has distributed more than 100,000 tamper tags and tank decals to deter theft of anhydrous ammonia, a key meth ingredient.

"Reducing or eliminating these important programs would leave large portions of Kansas with almost no resources to fight the meth problem," said Cristi Cain, coordinator of KMPP. "Reduced funding means reduced enforcement, which means increased addiction, increased trafficking and increased manufacture, which means more injured and killed children, more fires and explosions, and more crime to support the addiction. In short, it means an endangered Kansas."

In last year's DOJ spending bill, Moran was also successful in obtaining \$148,000 to expand the Kansas Bureau of Investigation office in Great Bend to aid in criminal and drug investigations in Kansas. Moran is a member of the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine, which is comprised of lawmakers dedicated to combating the spread of meth in the U.S.

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