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April 17, 2013

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf, Chair  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-309, the Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chaka Fattah, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Wolf and Ranking Member Fattah:

Thank you for your work as Chair and Ranking Member of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee. As this Subcommittee develops its fiscal year 2014 appropriations bill, I urge you to increase funding from previous appropriated levels for the "Meth Hot Spots" account within the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office at the Department of Justice.

By all leading indicators, the methamphetamine problem is growing, reaching historical impacts on our national and state economies, law enforcement capabilities, families, and societies. Nationally, clandestine methamphetamine laboratory incidences are steadily increasing. In 2011, there were 13,379 recorded incidents, nearly double the amount from 2008 (7,405). In my state of California, total domestic meth production continues to exceed the combined production of the next three largest meth-producing states. California continues to lead the Nation in the number of seizures of meth from "super labs," capable of producing hundreds of pounds of meth within a week.

The methamphetamine problem reaches beyond U.S. borders. Meth produced in Mexico is trafficked into our country, mainly by Mexican drug trafficking organizations, with border seizures at record levels. In the first 11 months of 2012, 6,450 kilograms (kg) of meth was seized along the southwest border, compared to 1,294 kg in 2008, a 500 percent increase. California remains the key entry point for Mexican meth with more methamphetamine seized at the border (4,576.77 kg in 2012) than all the other southwest border states combined, making border enforcement efforts in California an essential component of any national meth strategy. A lot of this meth is transported using existing shipping corridors, and thus provides a threat to cities along highways like Interstate 5, which runs through Stockton, a major city in my district.

Usage of methamphetamines continues at unacceptably high levels, almost epidemic proportions. Nationwide, Californians make up 40 percent of all methamphetamine treatment admissions. In fact, according to California's Department of Alcohol and Drug Program, more people in California seek treatment for meth addiction than alcoholism. The majority of whom, seek

treatment in publicly-funded facilities and at great expense to state and local governments. The most disturbing trend of increased meth use is among women of childbearing years. Users of meth, unlike other classifications of illicit drugs, are more prone to violence. Too often it is young children who suffer the most, living in drug endangered environments where meth is used, sold, or produced in private residences.

From an economic perspective, the effects of meth use are equally disturbing. The RAND Corporation's first national estimate suggested that the economic cost of meth use in the United States reached a staggering \$23.4 billion in 2005. Long-term use of this highly-addictive drug can lead to serious physical health problems, as well as depression, hallucinations, violent and aggressive behavior, malnutrition, disturbed personality development, and methamphetamine psychosis, a mental disorder similar to paranoid psychosis and schizophrenia. Meth production and usage impacts our societies, including explosions and fires triggered by the manufacturing of meth, environmental contamination, increased criminal activity, domestic violence, emergency room and other medical costs, the spread of infectious disease, including HIV, AIDS and hepatitis, and lost worker productivity.

In order to address this epidemic and help ease the extreme economic burden it places on our state and local governments, we are requesting an increase to \$40 million in total funding for the "Meth Hot Spots" program within the COPs office (\$27 million more than FY 12). This funding would provide with sufficient funding to release grants for methamphetamine related activities, a previously authorized and eligible use of this funding (section 754 of Public Law 109-177).

Methamphetamine is a substantial and growing threat to our state and our country at a time when fewer resources are available to address the problem. It costs our local, state, and federal governments billions of dollars each year in meth-related violent crime, emergency and public health services and lost worker productivity. We must restore critical anti-meth funding, which should be considered an investment rather than expenditure. We appreciate your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress