

Policy Resolution
on
Combating Methamphetamine in the Midwest
August 2004

- WHEREAS,** methamphetamine trafficking and abuse have changed in the United States during the past 10 years. International drug trafficking organizations have become a prominent manufacturing and distribution group in cities in the Midwest and the West. The international criminal organizations are able to manufacture in excess of 10 pounds of methamphetamine in a 24-hour period, producing low-cost methamphetamine; and
- WHEREAS,** twenty international methamphetamine trafficking organizations have been identified by the Drug Enforcement Agency as being involved in the Midwest, which is connected via major interstate highways, rail air to the West and Southwest border areas that serve as importation, manufacturing and staffing areas for international operations; and
- WHEREAS,** the Midwest's methamphetamine epidemic stems from two sources steadily increasing importation of methamphetamine into the region by organized trafficking groups and clandestine manufacturing of high purity methamphetamine by hundreds of users/dealers in small, but volatile, local labs; and
- WHEREAS,** according to the National Clandestine Laboratory Database, in calendar year 2003, there were 16,956 meth clandestine laboratory incidents, 7,745 or 46% of which were in Midwestern Governors Association (MGA) states. In calendar year 2002, there were 15,847 meth clandestine laboratory incidents, 7,331 or 46% of which were in MGA states; and
- WHEREAS,** the proliferation of methamphetamine labs and precursors has led to an increasing number of drug endangered children who are exposed to a variety of toxins and other dangerous activities. The super addictive nature of methamphetamine has also heightened the need for longer-term treatment to break the cycle of drug abuse, as well as foster care and treatment for the children of meth users; and
- WHEREAS,** the manufacture of methamphetamine is simple because it does not require specialized equipment or advanced technical training. Pseudoephedrine, contained in many over-the-counter cold and allergy products, is the key precursor for meth manufacturing. Anhydrous ammonia, red phosphorous,

lithium or sodium metal, hydrochloric acid, drain cleaner, lye, lantern fuel, and ether also are commonly used ingredients. Meth labs can be easily hidden in homes, garages, vacant buildings, outdoor areas, warehouses, motel rooms or even automobiles; and

WHEREAS, each pound of meth produced leaves behind five or six pounds of toxic waste. Meth cooks often pour leftover chemicals and byproduct sludge down drains in nearby plumbing, storm drains or directly onto the ground. Chlorinated solvents and other toxic by-products used to make meth pose long-term hazards because they can persist in soil and groundwater for years. Clean-up costs can be exorbitant and some homes are destroyed. Cleanups of labs are extremely resource-intensive and beyond the financial capabilities of most jurisdictions. The average cost of a cleanup is about \$5,000 but some cost as much as \$150,000; and

WHEREAS, there exists no coordinated national response to the meth issues faced by states. The United States currently lacks a centralized clearinghouse for meth-related information; and

WHEREAS, currently there exists no centralized dedicated stream of funding for states to access for assisting in countering the criminal, health, social and environmental affects of meth. The Community Oriented Policing Services program has been a source of funding for meth abuse problems facing the Midwest, but the future reliability and consistency of the funding is in question; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officials are faced with increasing challenges as meth and meth production shift from state to state as laws vary across the region; and

WHEREAS, state and local governments rely on the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program to assist with complex drug fighting efforts including those directed at meth; and

WHEREAS, a menace that does not recognize state boundaries, methamphetamine is a unique drug which has taken hold in the Midwest. It strains the resources of state and local officials and wreaks havoc on the drug's users and those close to them, the communities where it is produced and the individuals whose work it is to combat the problem. In 2002, the MGA began its efforts to identify ways that collaboration and information-sharing among states in the region could assist those working in law enforcement, drug prevention and treatment and environmental protection. The goal is to maximize resources and prepare state officials for the work required to win the war against methamphetamine abuse; now therefore be it



RESOLVED, that the Midwestern Governors encourage Congress to create a dedicated stream of funding for meth issues. This stream of funding would assist states in funding environmental issues related to cleanup and disposal of meth labs, health care costs such as treatment and prevention efforts, social services costs such as child protection services, drug court staffing costs and law enforcement training and operations; and be it

RESOLVED, that the Midwestern Governors support the establishment of a national clearinghouse for information related to all aspects of meth. This clearinghouse would be the first stop for state and local governments, parents, schools, university researchers, landlords, community leaders, law enforcement officials and public health workers to access information and additional sources on how they can combat the effects of meth, and will refer back to state clearinghouses and local service providers; and be it

RESOLVED, that the Midwestern Governors value and support the continued funding of the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Formula Grant program, and other federal justice grant programs that support local and state drug/crime fighting efforts, at current or increased levels in order to combat meth and other drug issues facing the region; and be it

RESOLVED, that the Midwestern Governors value and support the continued funding of Midwestern HIDTAs at current or increased levels in order to combat meth and other drug issues facing the region