

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 30, 2010

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Financial Services and General Government
133 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0001

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Financial Services and General Government
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0001

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Collins,

We are writing to ask you to provide \$239 million in funding for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program in Fiscal Year 2011. This will maintain funding for HIDTA at the Fiscal Year 2010 level. The Administration has proposed cutting the program's 2011 budget by 12%. This unwarranted change to the HIDTA program would seriously impact the efficiency and effectiveness of the program and result in the loss of jobs program-wide.

The HIDTA program is a unique partnership of state, local, tribal and federal law enforcement and criminal justice agencies that continues to demonstrate a remarkable degree of efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation. Significantly reducing the HIDTA program at this time sends the wrong signal. The HIDTA program is exactly the kind of program the federal government should be supporting in times of severe budget constraints.

Since 2005, the HIDTA program has dismantled or disrupted 13,830 drug trafficking and money laundering organizations of which 8,747 were either multi-state or international in scope. In the process, HIDTA initiatives seized more than 13,144 tons of marijuana, 418 tons of cocaine, 34 tons of methamphetamine, 123 tons of heroin, as well as smaller but significant amounts of other drugs. Conservatively, these drugs are valued at more than \$112 billion.

The HIDTA program has been at the forefront in the fight to eliminate domestic methamphetamine production. In the last five years, HIDTA initiatives have dismantled 8,704 drug labs capable of producing, at a minimum, \$87 million worth of methamphetamine.

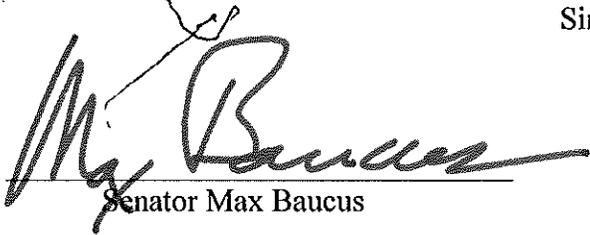
The notable value of the HIDTA program is further illustrated by its "Return on Investment (ROI)," or the ratio between the value of illegal drugs, cash and other drug-related assets seized from drug traffickers and the HIDTA grant dollars expended. In addition to the \$112 billion worth of drugs removed from the marketplace, HIDTA initiatives seized \$2.6 billion in cash, and \$1.2 billion in other assets. During the past five years, the HIDTA program produced a remarkable ROI of \$135 for each grant dollar spent on a HIDTA law enforcement and information sharing initiative.

The HIDTA program has developed closer ties and better working relationships among law enforcement and criminal justice agencies at all levels of government. HIDTA initiatives are responsible for providing more than 370,000 leads to other law enforcement agencies nationwide. Furthermore, the 28 individual HDTAs have deconflicted more than 3.9 million cases and events, while providing analytical case support to 165,044 cases since 2005.

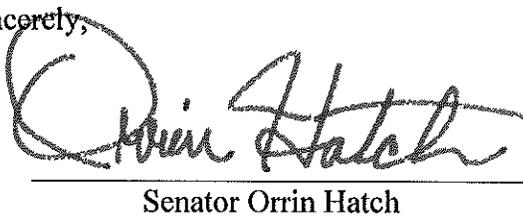
HIDTA has proven itself to be a fundamental component of our efforts to combat drug trafficking. Maintaining funding at the FY2010 level will allow it to continue its effective work and will help prevent the elimination of successful programs such as the Domestic Highway Enforcement (DHE), Domestic Marijuana Eradication and the Prescription Drug Project (PDP). We encourage you to provide \$239 million for HIDTA.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Senator Max Baucus



Senator Orrin Hatch



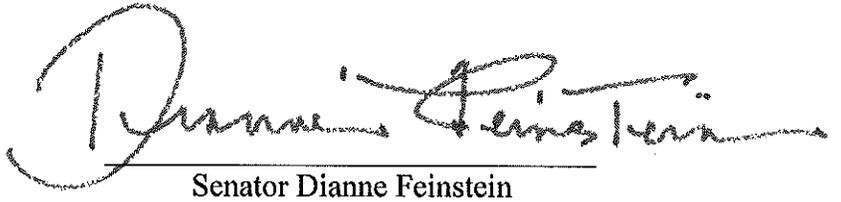
Senator Harry Reid



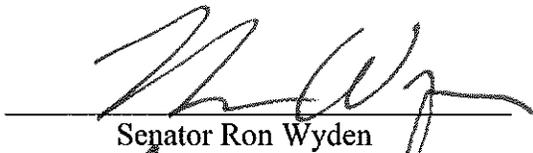
Senator Patrick Leahy



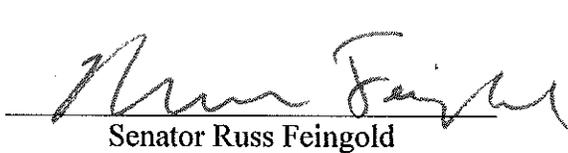
Senator Charles Schumer



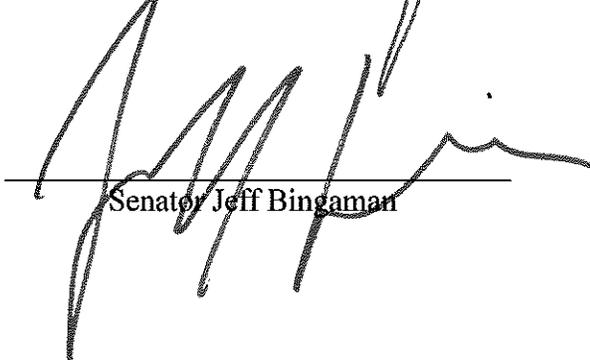
Senator Dianne Feinstein



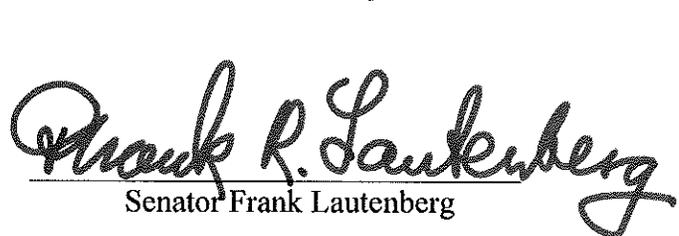
Senator Ron Wyden



Senator Russ Feingold



Senator Jeff Bingaman



Senator Frank Lautenberg



Senator Herb Kohl



Senator Tom Udall



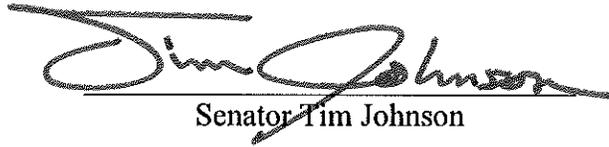
Senator Daniel Akaka



Senator Sheldon Whitehouse



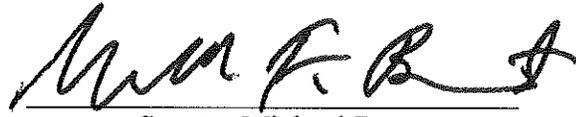
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand



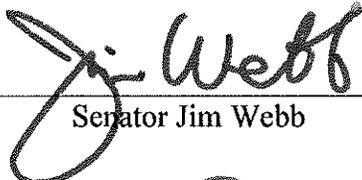
Senator Tim Johnson



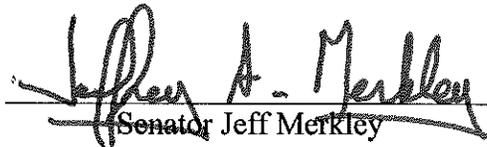
Senator Maria Cantwell



Senator Michael Bennet



Senator Jim Webb



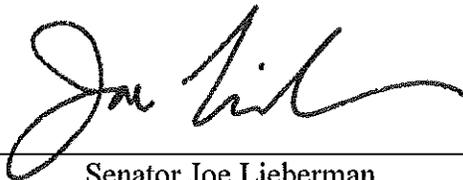
Senator Jeff Merkley



Senator Barbara Boxer



Senator Bernie Sanders



Senator Joe Lieberman



Senator Benjamin Cardin



Senator Mark Udall