



# NNOAC *Insight*

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*The Official Position of the National Narcotic Officers' Associations Coalition*

**PRESERVE THE BYRNE JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM  
(JAG)  
AND THE HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREA PROGRAM  
(HIDTA)**

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The President's Budget Request for FY 2006 proposes the elimination of the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program and a major reduction and realignment of the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program. These proposals would dramatically weaken America's drug enforcement capabilities and would result in increased drug addiction and associated crime over time.

The NNOAC encourages members of the House and Senate to reject the budget proposals for Byrne and HIDTA and ensure that each program is level-funded in FY 2006.

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- A comprehensive national drug control strategy includes robust state and local drug enforcement and institutionalized intergovernmental cooperation. Byrne and HIDTA provide these capabilities. Without them, our national drug control strategy is in jeopardy.
  - As we have seen in the past, decreases in commitment to the fight against drugs today will result in increases in drug-related crime and drug addiction tomorrow: resources used to fight illegal drugs diminished in the early 1990's and drug use subsequently increased throughout the mid-1990's.
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- If the proposals contained in the President's Budget Request for FY 2006 related to the Byrne JAG and HIDTA programs are embraced by Congress, then the remarkable recent progress we have made in lowering drug use and crime will be in jeopardy.
  - Byrne has fostered a system of multi-jurisdictional task forces across the nation which has greatly enhanced the effectiveness of law enforcement in fighting the illegal drug problem. If Byrne is eliminated, task force participation – and therefore law enforcement effectiveness – will be drastically reduced.

- If HIDTA is placed under the control of OCDETF or the Department of Justice, the most important benefit of the program will be threatened: enhanced coordination of effort among local, state, and federal agencies.
- Drug abuse costs America over 19,000 lives and \$160 billion annually. While resources are shifting to the War on Terror, the sheer magnitude and impact of the drug problem means that we must not fight terrorism at the expense of drug enforcement. Drug trafficking is a daily chemical attack on American soil.