"Drug Prevention Programs and the Fiscal Year 2006 Drug Control Budget:
Is the Federal Government Neglecting Illegal Drug Use Prevention?"
Government Reform Committee
Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources Subcommittee
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Chairman Souder, Ranking Member Cummings and other distinguished members of the Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on behalf of Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) and our more than 5,000 coalition members nationwide. I am very excited to be able to provide you with CADCA's perspective on the critical importance of drug use prevention.

According to national experts, such as Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, drug addiction is a developmental disorder that begins in adolescence, sometimes as early as childhood, for which effective prevention is critical. The younger a person first uses drugs, the higher their chance of adult drug dependency and addiction (see attachment 1). Youth who first smoke marijuana under the age of 14 are more than five times as likely to abuse drugs in their adulthood.[1]

Research also demonstrates that illegal drug use among youth declines as the perception of risk and social disapproval increases (see attachment 2). Drug prevention programs are the primary mechanisms to ensure that youth have the accurate information to realize that drugs are harmful, as well as the skills necessary to refuse drugs.

Historically, drug prevention has been severely under funded at the federal and state levels, relative to its importance and effectiveness in reducing drug use. In fact, a recent report by Columbia University's National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) found that only about one half cent of every dollar that states spend on substance abuse goes for prevention.[2]

Investments in prevention can pay huge dividends. For example, the savings per dollar spent on substance abuse prevention are substantial and range from $2.00 to $19.64, depending on the methodology used to calculate costs and outcomes.[3]

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[1] Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Science. (2003). *The 2002 National Household Survey on Drug Use.* Rockville, MD.
[2] The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University. (2001). *Shoveling up: The impact of substance abuse on state budgets*. Columbia, SC. 2, 17. Available: http://www.casacolumbia.org/pdshopprov/files/47299a.pdf.
[3] Swisher, John. (2004). *Journal of Primary Prevention.* "Cost-benefit estimates in prevention research." (25)12.

Preventing drug use must be a major priority because every new cohort of youth needs the benefit of effective drug prevention. Given the major negative costs and consequences of drug abuse on our society, which have been estimated at $50 billion per year, investing in the prevention of drug use should be a much higher priority for our nation.[4]

There is a small core set of federal drug prevention programs across federal agencies that have worked to complement each other in reducing youth drug use by 17% over the past three years. These programs are:

- The Department of Education's Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) program, State Grants portion and National Programs portion, including the President's Student Drug Testing initiative;

- ONDCP's Drug Free Communities (DFC) program and the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign (the Media Campaign);

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) 20% prevention set-aside of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention's (CSAP) Programs of Regional and National Significance;

- The Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) Demand Reduction program; and

- The National Guard's Drug Demand Reduction program.

Each of these programs is unique, serves a specific function in our nation's drug prevention efforts, and is critically important in helping to reduce drug use. Together, all of these programs constituted only 11.3% of the total federal drug control budget in FY 2005 (see attachment 3).

Unfortunately, a number of these programs are slated for cuts or total elimination in the President's FY 2006 budget request. The President's FY 2006 budget request proposes the elimination of the State Grants portion of the SDFSC program (-$441 million) and the DEA Demand Reduction program (-$9 million). It also proposes to reduce funding for the National Guard's Drug Demand Reduction program (-$4 million),[5] and CSAP's Programs of Regional and National Significance (-$15 million).

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[4] Executive Office of the President, Office of National Drug Control Policy. (2001). *The economic costs of drug abuse in the United States, 1992-1998.* Washington, DC: Executive Office of the President. Available: http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/pdf/economic_costs98.pdf.

[5] The National Guard Bureau estimates that 10% of the total appropriation for Counterdrug State Plans is allocated to Demand Reduction. The figure of $4.1 million represents 10% of the difference between the total amount allocated to the National Guard Counterdrug State Plans in FY 2005 and the President's budget request in FY 2006.

The President's FY 2006 budget would severely under fund drug prevention. It would be reduced from 11.3% of the total FY 2005 drug control budget to only 8.3% of the total FY 2006 drug control budget. The under funding of prevention in the FY 2006 budget is further exacerbated by the fact that the President's budget proposes a 2.2% overall increase for the drug control budget,[6] while it drastically shrinks the funding for drug prevention programs.

The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program

The State Grants portion of the SDFSC program is the backbone of youth drug prevention in the United States, serving more than 37 million youth per year with effective services, including peer resistance and social skills training, student assistance, parent training, and education about emerging drug trends. The SDFSC program costs less than one dollar per month, per child served. Comparatively, drug, alcohol and tobacco use currently cost schools throughout the country an EXTRA $41 billion per year in truancy, violence, disciplinary programs, school security and other expenses.[7]

There are a number of misconceptions about the State Grants portion of the SDFSC program that I would like to address (see attachment 4). The first misconception is that the low Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) score means the program has not shown results and is ineffective. The reality is, the Department of Education (DOE) has not yet implemented the Uniform Management Information and Reporting System (UMIRS) required by the No Child Left Behind Act. By law, the UMIRS includes a specified minimum data set to be collected by all states and reported on to the Secretary. To date, the DOE has provided NO guidance or direction to the states about any specific data requirements. Despite the fact that the DOE has not collected and reported on the data necessary to demonstrate this program's effectiveness to OMB, states have exercised due diligence and collected the data to show positive impacts and documented outcomes. For example, Indiana's SDFSC program contributed to a decrease of 15.7% in past 30 day marijuana use among 12th graders, down from 23.5% in 2001 to 19.8% in 2003. Maryland's SDFSC program contributed to a decrease of 47.4% in past 30 day meth use among 8th graders, down from 1.9% in 1998 to 1.0% in 2002.

Another misconception is that the State Grants portion of the SDFSC program is duplicative of other programs. The SDFSC program is actually the only federal program that provides funding for universal drug prevention to all of our nation's school-aged youth.

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[6] Executive Office of the President, Office of National Drug Control Policy. (2005). *National drug control strategy FY 2006 budget summary.* Washington, DC: Executive Office of the President. Available: http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/policy/06budget/.

[7] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Education and SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information. (2002). *Prevention Alert.* "Schools and Substance Abuse (I): It Costs $41 Billion." 5(10). Available: http://www.health.org/govpubs/prevalert/v5/5.aspx.

In addition, there is a misconception that this program is not accountable and that the funds are not used to implement science-based programs. In fact, the No Child Left Behind Act requires SDFSC programs to adhere to principles of effectiveness. Specifically, it requires that states perform an assessment of their substance abuse problem, using objective data and the knowledge of a wide range of community members; develop measurable goals and objectives; implement evidence- and science-based programs that have been shown to be effective and meet identified needs; and perform an assessment of program outcomes. States and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have taken these stringent new requirements very seriously and are implementing best practices and science-based programs as well as monitoring their progress in reducing youth drug use through student surveys (see attachments 5-10).

Finally, there is a misconception that these funds are spread too thin to be effective. In fact, although over half of the LEAs in the country receive less than $10,000, most of them have leveraged this small amount of money to develop consortia to pool their resources to provide optimally effective programs and services.

Under the President's proposed Fiscal Year 2006 budget request, the entire $441 million for the State Grants portion of the SDFSC program would be eliminated, while $87.5 million would be added to the National Programs portion of SDFSC for competitive grants to LEAs. This proposed new program is problematic as it would totally undermine local control and accountability and result in a very limited number of LEAs, with sophisticated grant writers, receiving these funds while leaving the majority of our nation's schools and students with absolutely no drug prevention programming at all. This is a major issue, as the SDFSC program acts as the portal into our nation's schools, gives community partners access to K-12 students and also provides the school-based representation in community-wide anti-drug efforts.

CADCA is fully supportive of the President's FY 2006 proposal to increase the funding for the President's Student Drug Testing initiative, as one important tool in a comprehensive drug prevention strategy. CADCA is concerned, however, that this program cannot be effective without the school-based drug prevention and intervention infrastructure provided by the State Grants portion of the SDFSC program.

Eliminating the State Grants portion of the SDFSC program will ultimately leave drug use unchecked in America's schools and have a devastating impact on the educational performance of students nationwide. Drug prevention is critical to ensuring the academic success of our youth. A recent study by the University of Washington found that lower reading and math scores are linked to peer substance use. On average, students whose peers avoided substance use had test scores (measured by the Washington Assessment of Student Learning reading and math scores) that were 18 points higher for reading, and 45

points higher for math.[8] Additionally, students who use alcohol or other drugs are up to five times more likely to drop out of school.[9]

Eliminating the funding for the State Grants portion of the SDFSC program is simply not an option for our nation. Congress needs to intervene and restore this funding.

Drug Free Communities Program

The Drug Free Communities (DFC) program has been a central, bipartisan component of our nation's demand reduction strategy since its passage in 1998 because it recognizes that the drug issue must be dealt with in every home town in America. This program empowers local citizens to get directly involved in solving their own community's drug issues. Even with the exponential growth of the program, since its inception, on average, there has only been enough money to fund 33% of those who have applied for funds (see attachment 11).

DFC grantees have achieved impressive results in communities throughout the country. Communities where anti-drug coalitions exist have shown a marked decline in drug use as compared to communities where coalitions do not exist. For example, in Cincinnati, Ohio, from 1993 to 2000 there was a **decrease of 41.0%** in marijuana use among seventh to twelfth graders. In the same region, over the same period, there was **an increase of 33.0%** in marijuana use, where a coalition **did not exist**.

I would like to take a few minutes to highlight some of the significant results achieved by DFC grantees:

- The Countywide Anti-Substance Abuse Efforts Coalition in Bonifay, Florida reports that lifetime use of marijuana among middle schools students decreased at a rate of 39.3%, from 14.0% in 2002 to 8.5% in 2004.
- The Drug Free Noble County in Albion, Indiana reports that monthly marijuana use among ninth graders decreased at a rate of 34.4%, from 24.4% in 1998 to 16.0% in 2003.
- The Harford County Coalition in Bel Air, Maryland has seen the number of 10th graders reporting past 30 day use of heroin decrease at a rate of 67.6%, from 3.7% in 1998 to 1.2% in 2002.
- In Michigan, the Troy Community Coalition reports that the number of 12th graders using inhalants in the past 30 days decreased at a rate of 33.3%, from 6.0% in 2000 to 4.0% in 2003.

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[8] Bence, M., Brandon, R., Lee, I., Tran, H. University of Washington. (2000). *Impact of peer substance use on middle school performance in Washington: Summary.* Washington Kids Count/University of WA: Seattle, WA. Available: http://www.hspc.org/wkc/special/pdf/peer_sub_091200.pdf.

[9] Lane, J., Gerstein, D., Huang, L., & Wright, D. (1998). *Risk and protective factors for adolescent drug use: Findings from the 1997 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse.* Available: http://www.samhsa.gov/hhsurvey/hhsurvey.html; Bray, J.W., Zarkin, G.A., Ringwalt, C., & Qi, J. (2000). Health Economics. "The relationship between marijuana initiation and dropping out of high school." 9(1), 9-18.

- Finally, in Wilmington, Vermont, the Deerfield Valley Community Partnership reported that past 30 day use of marijuana among eighth graders decreased at a rate of 78.9%, from 19.0% in 1997 to 4.0% in 2003.

Outcomes such as these are indicative of the successes that community anti-drug coalitions are achieving nationwide. They also demonstrate that when broad based groups consisting of multiple community sectors use their collective energy, experience and influence to address the drug problem in their neighborhoods, cities and counties, they achieve substantial results.

A more comprehensive list of significant outcomes from selected states around the nation is included as attachment 12.

Since CADCA received the grant to manage the National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute (the Institute), it has worked with hundreds of communities across the country to build and strengthen their capacity to plan, implement and evaluate data driven, community-wide, anti-drug strategies. Last year's appropriation included $2 million for the Institute. A funding level of $2 million is also necessary for FY 2006, as it will allow the Institute to provide the training, technical assistance and performance evaluation components needed to make existing coalitions more effective in reducing drug use and to increase the number of community coalitions nationwide. In addition, as DFC grantees receive their last year of funding, it is critical to fund the Institute at a sufficient level to ensure the sustainability and growth of our DFC graduates.

CADCA and its members are disappointed that the President's FY 2006 budget did not include a request to increase the funding for the DFC program. This program has not only proven to reduce drug use in communities around the nation to levels lower than national averages, but funding for this program has historically been insufficient to meet the overwhelming demand for grants.

The National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign

The Media Campaign is another drug prevention tool that has generated major opportunities to raise awareness among both youth and adults about illegal drugs. It has proven to be an important prevention program that has put the issue of youth drug use back on the American public's radar screen. CADCA sees the benefits of the Media Campaign and believes funding for this program should be maintained at a level of at least the $120 million in the President's FY 2006 budget request.

Twenty Percent Prevention Set-aside in the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant

The 20% prevention set-aside within the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant supports community-based prevention programs and services that help reduce drug use among youth. This set-aside supports a large range of services and activities in six key areas: information dissemination; community-based processes;

environmental strategies; alternative activities; education and problem identification and referral. The 20% set-aside complements the SDFSC program by providing community programming that enhances and reinforces the prevention education youth receive in schools.

The Center For Substance Abuse Prevention Programs of Regional and National Significance

CADCA fully supports CSAP's leadership in improving the capacity, effectiveness and accountability of substance abuse prevention through implementation of the Strategic Prevention Framework.

CSAP's Strategic Prevention Framework/State Incentive Grant (SPF/SIG) program is an important mechanism to help expand effective substance abuse prevention infrastructure. This program ensures that states and communities implement data driven, targeted and effective substance abuse prevention programming and services. The President's FY 2006 request proposes increasing the funding for SPF/SIG grants by $8 million, from within CSAP's existing funding base, to support a total of 32 grants (25 continuations and seven new).

CADCA has had continuing concerns about long-term trends that started in the Clinton Administration to request insufficient funding levels for CSAP. The President's FY 2006 budget request continues this trend by proposing a cut of $15 million for CSAP. CADCA recommends that Congress restore all of CSAP's funding and that this additional funding be allocated to the SPF/SIG grant program.

The Drug Enforcement Administration's Demand Reduction Program

The Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) Demand Reduction function plays a pivotal role in bridging the supply/demand split of the drug control field. The DEA's Demand Reduction program provides anti-drug coalitions with timely and critical information about local, regional and national drug threats, such as meth and prescription drug abuse.

The DEA's Demand Reduction Coordinators (DRCs) are unique. They are DEA agents who are also highly trained as prevention specialists. The DRCs' in-depth knowledge of the illegal drug scene, as well as prevention, make them a valuable resource to the drug prevention field. DRCs provide guidance and drug intelligence expertise to state and community leaders about all drugs of abuse, with an emphasis on emerging drug trends. They also facilitate collaboration between enforcement and demand reduction functions, by serving as law enforcement representatives on state and community-wide coalitions that deal with illegal drug issues. CSAP's requirement that the DRCs be included on the SPF/SIG Governor's Advisory Councils is an excellent example of this collaborative effort. The DRCs provide a great benefit to the DEA by creating and maintaining strong community support for their enforcement efforts.

The President's FY 2006 budget recommends "zeroing out" the DEA's entire Demand Reduction program, which, including personnel costs, is currently less than one half of one percent of the DEA's total budget. This program is much too important to be slated for elimination. Congress needs to ensure that this program is fully funded in the FY 2006 appropriations process.

The National Guard's Drug Demand Reduction Program

The National Guard's (the Guard) Drug Demand Reduction program represents approximately 10% of the Guard's total Counterdrug State Plans program. The logistical and program support provided to community anti-drug coalitions around the country by the Guard's Drug Demand Reduction program have been invaluable. Through the Guard, community coalitions and others at the local level have had access to facilitators, speakers, trainers, facilities and equipment that would otherwise have been unaffordable or unavailable. CADCA's partnership with the Guard enables our National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute to educate and train thousands of Drug Free Community grantees and other community leaders nationwide on a broad range of topics in an extremely cost effective manner.

The President's FY 2006 budget would reduce the Guard's Drug Demand Reduction efforts by approximately $4 million, because it proposes to cut the overall Counterdrug State Plans program by $40 million. CADCA and its members hope that the National Guard's Counterdrug State Plans program is funded at the highest possible level in FY 2006 so that the Drug Demand Reduction program does not have to sustain any cuts.

Conclusion

Every new cohort of youth MUST have the benefit of effective prevention efforts to ensure that drug use rates continue to decline. Unfortunately, the President's FY 2006 budget request for drug prevention is totally inadequate. Cutting or eliminating any of the core programs that make up the nation's drug prevention infrastructure in schools, communities and states will strain the already insufficient level of activities and services available to prevent drug use.

Historically, the funding levels for drug prevention have inversely correlated with youth drug use rates. Overall, the higher the funding, the lower the levels of drug use. Funding has been highest when the nation has been most concerned with the illegal drug issue. When funding for, and attention to, drug prevention wane, as they did in the mid-to late 1990's, youth drug use surges. With drug use on the decline over the past three years, for the first time in a decade, this is certainly not the time to eliminate or cut funding for critical drug prevention programs, such as the DOE's State Grants portion of the SDFSC program, the DEA Demand Reduction program, CSAP's Programs of Regional and National Significance and the National Guard's Drug Demand Reduction program.

Given that drug prevention has historically been woefully under funded, we would have hoped to see the President's FY 2006 budget request focused more aggressively on drug

prevention. Enhanced drug prevention funding is needed in order to reach all of America's youth, parents and citizens with comprehensive strategies and services, which raise awareness about the dangers, costs and consequences of illegal drug use, and provide the skills and support for youth to stay drug free.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important subject. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.