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For Immediate Release

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**CONGRESSIONAL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS  
LAUD HIDTA PROGRAM'S EFFECTIVENESS****Performance Management Process Evaluation Findings Directly  
Contradict ONDCP Director Walters' Assertions about Program's  
Ability to Demonstrate Results**

**June 23, 2005, Alexandria, Va.**—Today, a bipartisan panel of Congressional leaders and law enforcement executives from across the country held a press conference in the U.S. Capitol to counter assertions made by Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) Director John Walters about the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Program's ability to demonstrate results.

U.S. Congressmen Steny Hoyer (D-Md), Mark Souder (R-Ind), and Elijah Cummings (D-Md) joined U.S. Senators Max Baucus (D-Mont), Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), and Conrad Burns (R-Mont), to proclaim their support for the restoration of funding for the HIDTA Program. Ron Brooks, president of the National Narcotics Officers' Associations' Coalition, Major Jim Keathley, president of the National Association of State Drug Enforcement Administrators, Thomas Carr, chairman of the National HIDTA Directors Association (NHDA) Performance Management Process and director of the Washington/Baltimore HIDTA, and Thomas Gorman, president of the NHDA and director of the Rocky Mountain HIDTA, represented the interests of national law enforcement executives and regional HIDTA programs across the country.

In February 2005, ONDCP Director Walters recommended reducing the HIDTA Program's FY06 budget by 56 percent, and moving the program to the U.S. Department of Justice's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force program. Director Walters made these recommendations without consulting the hundreds of State and local law enforcement leaders who comprise the 28 HIDTA executive boards, or those Congressional leaders who have supported the HIDTA Program since its inception in 1990.

The 2005 National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS) states that the FY06 HIDTA-related recommendations were made "as a result of its performance."

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Specifically, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) evaluation found that the HIDTA Program has not been able to demonstrate results. However, when OMB implemented PART, ONDCP only provided HIDTA budget summaries and anecdotal information to OMB evaluators. Consequently, OMB did not have the data it needed to determine whether the program had demonstrated results.

Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-Md) expressed his disappointment with the budget recommendations in his recent statement, "I sincerely regret that the President proposed to cut more than \$120 million from the HIDTA program and move the program from the Office of National Drug Control Policy to the Department of Justice. These changes will in fact eliminate an effective program that efficiently coordinates our law enforcement efforts to address serious problems with drug consumption and drug-related crime in our region and throughout the country. I am pleased that the Appropriations Committee restored this funding and kept the Program at ONDCP when we reported the bill out of the Committee on Tuesday."

Congressman Mark Souder, a vocal opponent of the FY06 HIDTA-related budget recommendations, said, "I'd like to thank the National HIDTA Directors Association for its work in providing performance data for the HIDTA Program. This has historically been one of the most successful and accountable programs in the field of drug enforcement, but the HIDTA directors are to be commended for continuing to improve it. Performance measurement is vital, as Congress, and State and local policymakers, decide how to allocate scarce public funds. This is an important step in making sure that HIDTA continues to promote effective joint Federal, State and local drug enforcement operations."

Additionally, many legislators have recognized that the proposed HIDTA funding reduction would affect other areas related to the drug problem. Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont) explained, "The increased drug manufacturing, trafficking, and addiction that would result if the HIDTA Program's funding is not restored will have a ripple effect throughout Montana. It will affect our public health and corrections systems, and the courts, negatively impacting public safety and the quality of life in Montana and across the United States."

Senator Conrad Burns (R-Mont) expressed his apprehension over law enforcement's ability to address the Nation's methamphetamine problem if the ONDCP Director's proposals are accepted. Burns said, "I remain deeply concerned about the ramifications of Director Walters' budget recommendations on law enforcement's ability to counter the methamphetamine production, distribution, and usage in our nation.

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The HIDTA Program: Disrupting the Marketplace, Demonstrating Results

When the National HIDTA Directors Association (NHDA) realized that there was currently no methodology in place to measure its efficiency or effectiveness, they developed the evaluative Performance Management Process (PMP). The system is specifically designed to measure the HIDTA Program's ability to achieve its two goals:

- Disrupting the market for illegal drugs by dismantling or disrupting drug trafficking and/or money laundering organizations; and
- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of HIDTA initiatives.

The evaluation findings show that in 2004, the HIDTA Program has demonstrated an extraordinary ability to disrupt the marketplace for illegal drugs, addressing drug trafficking organizations as if they were multinational corporations. Their 2004 findings include:

- Three-quarters of the 4,729 drug trafficking organizations HIDTA law enforcement initiatives targeted were either completely dismantled or notably hampered in their ability to operate (disrupted). Fifty-five percent of these organizations were either international or multi-state in scope.
- HIDTA initiatives are working effectively to seize drug traffickers' financial supports. In 2004, they disrupted or dismantled over 320 money laundering initiatives. Eighty-six percent of these organizations were either international or multi-state in scope.
- Drug trafficking organizations are losing their inventory and profits as HIDTA task forces across the country seize their drugs and assets. The wholesale value of drugs seized by HIDTA task forces was \$10.5 billion. The task forces seized slightly less than \$0.5 billion in assets.
- HIDTA task forces pursued and apprehended over 12,000 fugitives in 2004.
- Calculating the 2004 drug and asset seizure value against the \$177 million expended to support the program's law enforcement initiatives yielded a return on investment of \$60 in drug seizures and \$3 in asset seizures for every \$1 invested in the HIDTA Program.

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## National HIDTA Directors Association

- In all, HIDTA-funded initiatives were responsible for over 7,600 case referrals to other agencies and other HIDTAs. Persistence and information sharing are hallmarks of the HIDTA Program.
- The HIDTA Program provided advanced analytical support to over 34,000 cases in 2004. There is no doubt that this support contributed to the remarkable results that the HIDTA Program demonstrated.
- The HIDTA Program provided training to over 78,665 students in 2004, at a cost to the program of \$8 per classroom hour. The training was provided at no cost to HIDTA initiative members, members of participating agencies and, in some instances, members of non-participating agencies.

Upon reviewing the PMP information, Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) stated, “The HIDTA Program’s data unquestionably show that the HIDTA Program is intensely focused on addressing major drug trafficking organizations, and that the partnerships among Federal, State, and local law enforcement facilitated by the National HIDTA Program have resulted in a synergy that produces greater, more cost-efficient results than any one agency or department—Federal, State, or local—could achieve on its own.”

### Congressional Support Continues

In response to the FY06 HIDTA-related budget recommendations, both the House and Senate have issued letters to their respective appropriations committee leaders, requesting the restoration of funding for the HIDTA Program within ONDCP. The House letter, which was signed by 90 Members, recognized that the cuts would “cause a significant gap in drug enforcement coverage, particularly in rural areas, that state and local law enforcement will be incapable of filling.” The Senate letter, which was signed by 56 Members, stated that the result of the proposed funding cut would “severely undermine federal, state, and local drug enforcement cooperation and coordination, threatening to undo the substantial progress we have made in reducing drug use since 2001.” In addition, the Senate passed a “Sense of the Senate” budget resolution amendment that assumes that the HIDTA Program’s funding will be restored to the FY05 level of \$227 million, and that it will remain in ONDCP.

Congress is expected to vote on the HIDTA Program’s FY06 funding level by the end of summer. Until then, State and local law enforcement leaders will continue to educate their legislators on the vital importance of the HIDTA Program in focusing on the drug trafficking organizations that threaten our schools, neighborhoods, and communities.

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