

MESSAGE

from the President

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Where Do We Go from Here?

AFTER MONTHS OF WAITING, I am happy to announce that we have finally received the \$1.6 million award from the Department of Justice. As you probably know, this will enable NDAA to again be able to pay all the costs, except for dinners, for participants in the courses offered at the National Advocacy Center (NAC) in Columbia, SC. This is great news, especially in light of the economic realities facing many prosecutors' offices around the country are.

This money, though very much needed and appreciated, is by no means an indication that the funding needs of the NAC are over. With this money, we project we will be able to cover expenses through approximately September 2010. We must continue to push for permanent funding for the NAC from Congress, while also continuing our efforts to secure additional funding from the Department of Justice and any other potential sources we can identify. These efforts are ongoing on many fronts and will continue. However, we need your help.

Months ago we asked all elected or appointed prosecutors across the country to sign a single letter from each state addressed to every member of that state's congressional delegation stressing the quality of the training available at the NAC and the importance of establishing permanent funding to keep this essential training available. We worked closely with our various state coordinators and the National Association of Prosecutor Coordinators (NAPC) in this effort. Thanks to the hard work of NAPC and many, many others, we were able to achieve our goal and have letters from all 50 states with over 1200 signatures circulated to every congressional delegation requesting permanent funding for the NAC.

The good news is that we have many positive comments from congressmen, senators and staffers, including many who can be very influential. The bad news is that most of the letters came in too late to have the desired impact early

enough in the budget process for the coming fiscal year. However, from the comments we have received, it is clear that they can have the desired impact if we get the letters early in the budget process, which will begin again this January.

To that end, we are again working with NAPC and asking every state coordinator and all elected prosecutors to sign a letter from your state again informing your congressional delegation of the importance of permanent funding for the NAC. If we can achieve the same result (letters from all 50 states and even more signatures by the end of January 2010), we will make a strong statement and show how unified and committed NDAA is to this important issue.

There is also something many of our assistant prosecutors can do to help us in our NAC funding efforts. If you have been to a course at the NAC, write your congressional delegation and let them know from your personal experience how important the continued funding is. And, if you have not had the opportunity to attend the NAC yet due to your office budget restrictions, write your delegation and tell them how essential funding is so that you will be able to attend the best training for prosecutors in this country.

As important as funding for the NAC is, it is by no means the only issue we have been working on. We are also working every day on the John R. Justice Act and securing appropriate funding for student loan forgiveness for our assistant prosecutors who are burdened by large law school debts. Additionally, we continue to work closely with congressional staffers, the White House and many other groups on the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report. We are also monitoring and working closely with other law enforcement organizations regarding proposed legislation by Senator Webb (D-VA) that could impact our criminal justice system for years to come.

(Continued on page 11)

necessary. A recent participant, Keith Burt, a deputy district attorney in San Diego says, “this (computer digital evidence) is the way of the future in crime. Anybody that sticks a gun in somebody’s face and forcibly takes money is a fool. Many criminals, even gang members, are recognizing this and are all going to more sophisticated ways to acquire money.”

The objective of the NCFI is to not only meet a critical demand, but assist in positioning law enforcement one step ahead of the criminal.

Message from the Executive Director

(Continued from page 6)

we hope to do a demonstration at the meeting in Charleston in the spring. I am confident that NDAA members are going to be very pleased with the tremendous improvements to our Web site and our overall IT structure and systems.

I could go on and on, but suffice to say that we remain in “high gear” with a focus on:

- maintaining and increasing our grant funding and being fiscally responsible,
- being at the table—wherever the table is—on every public policy issue relating to the criminal justice system, and
- providing top-notch technical assistance and training to our prosecutors across the country.

On a personal note, and as represented when I was honored to be selected as your executive director, during my

The 2010 schedule of prosecutor training is as follows:

- March 22–26 (application deadline December 11)
- May 3–7 (application deadline January 22)
- July 26–30 (application deadline April 16)
- August 23–27 (application deadline May 14)

For more information on the NCFI and how to attend training, go to their Web site at www.ncfi.ussc.gov, or contact Barry Page at barry.page@alabamada.gov.

years at the White House I also served in the capacity of sports minister of the United States. (We are one of only a few countries that do not have a minister of sports but are represented by a White House appointee). A year ago the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) selected me to head the International Independent Observer Program—to make certain that athletes compete drug-free—at the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada, from February 10–28, 2010. I will, of course, be available by e-mail and cell phone and will continue to work on all issues related to NDAA, but I will not be in Alexandria or Columbia. As always, if you have questions about any issues regarding your NDAA, please don’t hesitate to call me (703.919.9286) or e-mail me (sburns@ndaa.org) at anytime.

Message from the President

(Continued from page 4)

These are only some of the issues NDAA, as the voice of America’s prosecutors, is working on. Many people work tirelessly every day to be that voice for each of you—not only your executive director but also our two legislative personnel, Jason Baker and Ryan Welch. Ryan is our independent contractor who is doing great work for not much pay. We need to find the money to keep him working.

We are holding our Capital Conference in Washington February 8–10, 2010. If we can receive a letter supporting the NAC from each state by then and combine that with a strong showing of attendance, that will really make a bold statement. At the Capital Conference, we will of course be focusing on many of the other important issues in addition to the NAC funding. Specifically, we will also use our time

on the Hill and at our reception to stress the importance of proper funding for the JRJ Act and student loan forgiveness, as well as for necessary updates on the NAS or other issues as appropriate.

Where do we go from here? We have made great strides in the past year or so. We have a new executive director who is well-respected, energetic, hard working and doing a great job. The John R. Justice Act is now law and we are about to get funding in some amount. We are again able to pay the expenses for students attending NAC courses, at least for nearly the next year. We are committed to going forward. Going forward by securing permanent funding for the NAC. Going forward by obtaining appropriate funding for student loan forgiveness. With the help and commitment of all of you we can accomplish these goals and many more.