

MESSAGE

from the Executive Director

SCOTT BURNS



What Else Should NDAA Be Doing to Make Your Job Easier?

IN THE DAY-TO-DAY COMMOTION of Washington, D.C., it is easy to lose sight of the fact that NDAA's number one mission is to serve the needs of "real" prosecutors across America. It is important that San Mateo County District Attorney Jim Fox represented us well with his testimony before Congress last week regarding "Life without Parole for Juveniles" in appropriate cases; it was nice to have the White House invite NDAA President Joe Cassilly to stand with Vice President Biden and speak about Sonia Sotomayor (soon to be the only justice on the Supreme Court who was a prosecutor); and it is gratifying that NDAA is now weighing in on any and all issues related to the criminal justice system (the Hate Crimes Bill, the Webb Commission, Crack/Powder, the National Academy of Sciences report to name just a few), and our voice is being heard. And while these things are important and do affect prosecutors, NDAA is committed to doing a better job in surveying the needs of prosecutors and providing them with what is helpful in the "real world."

In the months to come and as our new Web site comes on-line and we expand information and services, we will call upon our members to let us know what is helpful and what is not. Is the training we are providing what you need? Are members accessing our bank of information regarding defense experts? Do members actually read the "news clips" and *The Prosecutor* magazine? Are requests for technical assistance being answered in a timely and helpful manner? What else should NDAA be doing to make your job easier?

In order to make sure that NDAA provides you with the tools and information you need, we will rely heavily on our partners at the National Association of Prosecutor Coordinators (NAPC). For those of you that don't know, NAPC is the only national professional association of prosecutor coordinators. It consists of 50 member states and

meets a minimum of twice a year to share and exchange ideas, information and trends that impact state prosecutors. NAPC's outgoing president, Rick Malone of Georgia, has done an excellent job, and incoming president, Randy Hillman of Alabama, is top notch. My coordinator, during my 16 years in Utah, was Mark Nash, and he was and is an incredible resource on just about every issue prosecutors encounter. Most NAPC members are former state prosecutors (and not just prosecutors but really good prosecutors) who are experienced trainers, strong voices in their respective state legislatures and crucial to the success of NDAA.

And speaking of being "crucial to the success of NDAA," I have to tell you that our president, Joe Cassilly, has been a warrior this past year on every front; he has been to Capitol Hill, the White House, and the Department of Justice fighting for monies for the National Advocacy Center, pleading for funding for the prosecutors' student loan assistance program and loudly defending the good work of DAs, county attorneys and solicitors, never missing an opportunity to remind whomever will listen "...did you know that 95 percent of all criminal cases in this country are handled by state and local prosecutors." The good news is Joe will become the chairman of the board after the summer conference and our incoming president Chris Chiles is going to do great things as well.

Let me close by encouraging each of you to take some time this summer to enjoy your family and friends. In the chaotic and stress-filled world in which you work, it is easy to forget that you really do need to make time for a trip, or a ballgame, or anything that gives you a breather. I hope to see many of you in Orlando, and in the meantime, as I've said before, we here at NDAA in Virginia and South Carolina work for you, and if there is anything we can do for you, please feel free to pick up the phone and call me (703.549.9222) or send me an e-mail (sburns@ndaa.org).