

MESSAGE

from the President

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As We Re-energize Our Association

“When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall one by one.”—Edmund Burke

AS I TAKE OVER AS PRESIDENT of the National District Attorneys Association I would like to introduce myself to our members. I come from Harford County, Maryland, a jurisdiction at the northern end of the Chesapeake Bay. My office serves a population of about a quarter of a million in a suburban to rural area with a staff of over 70, including 30 prosecutors. I have been a prosecutor for 31 years and was first elected 26 years ago. Before I attended college, I served in the U.S. Army as a Ranger in Vietnam.

I am excited to see where NDAA is headed as we re-energize our association. We have recently brought in Tom Sneddon as interim executive director. Tom is the retired DA from Santa Barbara, California. We have dramatically cut expenses; saving half a million dollars in rent alone. We have cut positions to save salaries and I have pledged not to ask NDAA to reimburse any of the expenses I incur on behalf of NDAA.

We are more active than ever on Capitol Hill and with the various federal law enforcement agencies. We continue to receive federal money to fund our initiatives, including the National Advocacy Center. We need our membership support more than ever.

We all know that any organization, association or committee accomplishes only as much as its most active members can do. Whether it is the parent-teacher association, our church, our fraternal organization or our local or state bar association, the projects and missions are carried out by a few dedicated volunteers. Often this is due to the fact that the members are not clear about what the organization needs and how the individual member can help it succeed.

NDAA is an organization of elected and appointed prosecutors and their crime fighting assistants and deputies. In other words, it is an association of the good guys who fight for truth, justice and the American way but without the cape and tights. Yet fighting for the victims of crime, safer communities and the principles of law are not enough for prosecutors if we

allow our public support to be eroded by misinformation and our funding to be cut by legislators and administrators who don't understand our issues. We must stand together to act, but each of us, individually, has to do what we can.

During this federal election cycle, the members of NDAA should be preparing to educate our congressmen and the next administration about the issues confronting us and how we use federal funds and grants. How many of you have ever met with your federal representatives and senators when they are back in your home states? If you would make time to do this, you would be doing yourselves and your fellow prosecutors an enormous service and you would be greatly increasing the voice of NDAA on Capitol Hill.

First, your members of congress need to learn that NDAA represents all of the prosecutors in their district and state. NDAA needs you to put together a delegation of NDAA members from your state and seek a meeting with your congressmen. They need to hear that you are members of the National District Attorneys Association; they need to hear how many prosecutors are in their districts and how many are NDAA members; they need to hear how federal funding is used by your offices to help victims of crime, stop domestic violence and child abuse, fund prosecutors and staff for your offices and what training and services your prosecutors get from NDAA.

Even before I became president I made many trips to Washington D.C. to represent NDAA. Capitol Hill is deluged with groups, political action committees, lobbyists, professional associations and on and on. If I go in and ask to talk about a congressman's vote on a bill for NDAA it means nothing, but if I go in and say I represent prosecutors and crime victims in their home district it means something. NDAA is there for their constituents to address the constituents' problems.

We need the members of NDAA to approach those members of Congress they have a relationship with to educate them. Tell your congressmen you are a member of NDAA and that NDAA speaks for you, your office and your constituents. Tell them that your constituents are their voters. Tell them

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NDA A

Names in the News

NDA A WAS SADDENED to learn of the death of **Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones** on August 20, 2008. Jones served as an active member of NDA A and as prosecuting attorney of Cuyahoga County (Cleveland), Ohio, from 1991 to 1999 when she was elected to the U.S. Congress.

Another big loss to the NDA A community was the death of **Calvin L. Beale** on September 2, 2008. Although his name may not be familiar to members, his work should be. Mr. Beale took the photographs of most of the court-

houses that have appeared on the cover of *The Prosecutor* magazine. Beale was considered a legend at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Department of Economics Research where he worked in demographics and rural sociology. While visiting counties around the country to gather facts, he took photographs of the county courthouses. We discovered his wonderful courthouse photos on the USDA Web site, and Beale generously agreed to send NDA A the high resolution images of the courthouse photos we selected.

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about the educational opportunities that NDA A provides to your prosecutors that are not available elsewhere. Call NDA A headquarters before your meeting with your member of Congress and we will send you material on pending bills and issues NDA A needs their support on.

Of our over 7,000 NDA A members, we need at least 635 NDA A members (all 7,000 would be fantastic) to step forward and take it upon themselves to meet with their senators and representatives. We need prosecutor coordinators and state prosecutor associations to be leaders in this effort. Our goal should be to contact every member of Congress and explain to them how they can help prosecutors, victims and the citizens of their states by working with the National District Attorneys Association. When you finish with Congress, it

would also help if you would take time to meet with your governors, attorneys general and state legislators so that they will also know of NDA A.

NDA A also needs members to recruit new members. I could spend my entire year as president writing prosecutors and asking them to join and not have the success of a few hundred NDA A members who take it upon themselves to meet with newly elected, appointed or hired prosecutors in their neighboring jurisdictions. Let them know that you are an NDA A member, tell them of the importance of having a voice in our nation's capital, of having a national organization that can help you with state and local issues, that can provide unparalleled training opportunities and can improve the status of prosecution as a profession. Please, go out of your way to reach out to new and veteran prosecutors and encourage them to become NDA A members.

Membership in the National District Attorneys Association should be a matter of professional pride for all prosecutors.

CONTACT NDA A

If you need to contact a staff member of NDA A regarding any aspect of your membership, please use the list of names, numbers and e-mail addresses below.

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