

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 28, 2015

The Honorable John Boozman, Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Financial Services and General Government  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Coons, Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Financial Services and General Government  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Coons:

We are writing to ask you to provide continued support for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program in Fiscal Year 2016. Unwarranted changes to the HIDTA program would seriously impact the efficiency and effectiveness of the program and result in the loss of jobs program-wide.

The HIDTA program is a unique partnership of state, local, tribal, and Federal law enforcement and criminal justice agencies that continues to demonstrate a remarkable degree of efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation.

Reducing the HIDTA program at this time sends the wrong signal. The HIDTA program is exactly the kind of program the Federal government should be supporting in times of severe budget constraints.

In 2014, the HIDTA program dismantled or disrupted 2,185 drug trafficking organizations (DTOs), of which 600 were international, 725 multi-state, and 859 local. In the process, HIDTA initiatives seized more than 2.3 million kilograms of marijuana, 54,000 kilograms of cocaine, 30,468 kilograms of methamphetamine, and 7,450 kilograms of heroin, as well as smaller but significant amounts of other drugs. Conservatively, these drugs are valued at more than \$14.5 billion.

The notable value of the HIDTA program is further illustrated by its "Return on Investment (ROI)," or the ratio between the value of illegal drugs, cash, and other drug-related assets seized from drug traffickers and the HIDTA grant dollars expended. In addition to the \$14 billion worth of drugs removed from the marketplace, HIDTA initiatives seized \$956 million in cash and other assets. In 2014, the HIDTA program produced a remarkable ROI of \$65.58 for each grant dollar spent on the HIDTA law enforcement and information sharing initiatives. The HIDTA program will return approximately \$200 million in forfeited assets from criminal enterprises to their state and local partners, allowing them to continue their efforts even during tough economic times.

The HIDTA program has developed closer ties and better working relationships among law enforcement and criminal justice agencies at all levels of government. HIDTA initiatives are responsible for providing more than 32,877 leads to other law enforcement agencies nationwide. Furthermore, the 28 individual HIDTAs have deconflicted more than 207,000 cases and events, while providing analytical case support to 19,658 cases.

HIDTA has proven itself to be a fundamental component of our efforts to combat drug trafficking. Maintaining the HIDTA program will allow it to continue its effective work and will help prevent the elimination of successful programs, such as Domestic Highway Enforcement (DHE), Domestic Marijuana Eradication, and the Prescription Drug Project (PDP). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Johnny Isakson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Johnny Isakson  
United States Senator