



Working for Safe and Drug Free Communities

Growing up in the small town of Cumming, my parents took comfort in knowing their children were growing up in a safe, tight-knit community. Cumming was the kind of place where you could walk the streets at night and feel safe. I believe every community in Iowa can and must be that way.

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That's why I continue to work alongside our sheriffs and our police to keep our homes and our children safe. Together, we worked to pass a tough crime bill that has put 702 more police officers in our communities and put more criminals behind bars. And it's why we're still working to crack down on gangs and drugs and violence – especially when it comes to the epidemic of methamphetamine use and production in Iowa.

Meth is a highly addictive drug, leading more and more of our citizens and young people down a path of personal destruction. Studies have found that meth use is linked to domestic violence and other violent crimes. Last year, 764 meth labs were found in Iowa – a sixteen percent increase over the previous year.

Given the serious threat posed by meth, I worked to designate Iowa as a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA). This designation has meant greater resources for Iowa's police and sheriffs as they combat meth. This comprehensive effort has resulted in regional task forces throughout the state to eliminate meth trafficking and eradicate highly toxic meth labs from Iowa's rural communities.

Unfortunately, the Bush Administration has proposed to cut funding for the HIDTA anti-drug initiative by \$20 million – an almost 10% decrease. Cutting our drug interdiction resources will only move the anti-meth effort backward – not forward. Cutting funding for our anti-drug efforts sends the wrong message to criminals and to Iowa's families.

We also shouldn't reduce our support for our sheriffs and police as they are working hard to keep Iowans safe. Yet the Administration's budget would virtually eliminate funding for the highly successful Community Oriented Policing Program – COPs – which has helped put more law enforcement officers on the street. Additionally, the Administration's budget would cut \$200 million from the Byrne Grant program that funds local law enforcement efforts.

Every street can be as safe as the one I grew up on in Cumming. But it will take a sustained effort and the strong support for our police and sheriffs to protect our children from drugs like meth. I'm going to keep working to make sure Iowa law enforcement has the necessary resources to keep Iowa's communities safe and drug-free.