

Washington, D.C. - Representative Lee Terry (NE-02) today authored and sent a letter, with 92 bipartisan signers, urging key chairmen to help law enforcement officers combat methamphetamine (meth) by fully funding the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) program.

"Having 92 co-signers is nearly unheard-of, especially when republicans and democrats are equally united," said Terry. "This illustrates the incredible interest in Congress to preserve these grants.

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Byrne-JAG must be fully funded to ensure Nebraska law enforcement officers can effectively fight meth.

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Without full funding, critical state task forces will be eliminated. We must support our officers arresting meth dealers, dismantling meth labs, and investigating criminal organizations distributing meth. I am pleased so many Members of Congress have joined my efforts to ensure our sheriffs and police chiefs have the resources they need to combat meth in our communities."

Terry's letter urges Chairman Frank Wolf (R-VA) of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Science, State, Justice and Commerce, and Chairman Richard Shelby (R-AL) of the counterpart Senate subcommittee, to fully fund Byrne-JAG during negotiations to resolve differences in funding levels between their separate bills. The House of Representatives' bill included \$366 million for Byrne-JAG, while the Senate would provide \$900 million. Terry's letter urges appropriators to accept the Senate level. A bipartisan coalition of 47 Republican and 45 Democratic Members of Congress joined Terry. For his letter, Terry again teamed up with the sponsors of his amendment to restore Byrne-JAG funding during the House debate in June, including Congressmen Tom Osborne (R-NE) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE). Senator Dayton (D-MN) has begun circulating the Terry letter in the Senate, gaining 34 signers at last count.

"With the strong support of 92 members behind us, and more in the Senate, I am confident we will see Byrne-JAG funding increased during conference, hopefully to \$900 million," Terry said. "We must do everything we can to restore this funding to protect families and children from the horrors of meth."

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Byrne-JAG funds 828 state and local anti-drug task forces nationwide, including 9 of 11 in Nebraska . These task forces make up the bulk of Nebraska 's meth enforcement efforts, and are directly responsible for 5,000 to 5,500 drug arrests annually. Last year, Congress provided \$634 million in Byrne-JAG grants to law enforcement agencies, including almost \$2.2 million for the Nebraska State Patrol. The Administration has recommended the complete elimination of funding for Byrne-JAG.

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