



May 11, 2010

The Honorable Russ Carnahan
United States House of Representatives
1710 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for the “Universal Access to Methamphetamine Treatment Act”

Dear Representative Carnahan,

On behalf of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL), I am writing to voice our support for the “Universal Access to Methamphetamine Treatment Act.” NACDL is the preeminent organization advancing the mission of the criminal defense bar to ensure justice and due process for persons accused of crime or wrongdoing. NACDL’s 10,000-plus direct members – and 90 affiliate organizations totaling more than 40,000 attorneys – include private criminal defense lawyers, public defenders, military defense counsel, law professors and judges committed to preserving fairness and promoting a rational and humane criminal justice system.

Central to NACDL’s core mission is the goal to focus more attention on the social and economic benefits of crime prevention and alternatives to incarceration, including access to treatment for individuals with substance abuse problems. Last September, NACDL released *America’s Problem-Solving Courts: The Criminal Cost of Treatment and the Case for Reform*, a comprehensive report on the nation’s problem-solving courts, with a particular focus on drug courts. The report’s most fundamental recommendation is to “address substance abuse as a public health issue – not a criminal justice issue.” By treating drug addiction as a crime, instead of as an illness, vast public resources are wasted and addicts do not receive the treatment they require. Instead, “[d]rug treatment should be freely available to every person addicted to drugs, not simply those who become ensnared in the criminal justice system.”

By improving and expanding treatment options for all methamphetamine abusers, the “Universal Access to Methamphetamine Treatment Act” adopts a proven strategy that will reduce crime and improve lives. We look forward to working with you to pass this well-crafted and beneficial legislation.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Hujar Orr
President

President

Cynthia Hujar Orr San Antonio, TX

President-Elect

Jim E. Lavine Houston, TX

First Vice President

Lisa M. Wayne Denver, CO

Second Vice President

Steven D. Benjamin Richmond, VA

Treasurer

Jerry J. Cox Mount Vernon, KY

Secretary

Theodore Simon Philadelphia, PA

Parliamentarian

E. G. Morris Austin, TX

Immediate Past President

John Wesley Hall Little Rock, AR

Directors

James A. H. Bell Knoxville, TN

Brian H. Bieber Coral Gables, FL

Blair G. Brown Washington, DC

William H. Buckman Moorestown, NJ

Ray C. Carter Jackson, MS

Anne M. Chapman Phoenix, AZ

Jay Clark Cincinnati, OH

Anthony Cotton Waukesha, WI

Steven J. Feldman Pleasantville, NJ

Drew Findling Atlanta, GA

Todd Foster Tampa, FL

Richard K. Gilbert Washington, DC

Tracy Green Los Angeles, CA

Bonnie Hoffman Leesburg, VA

Michael J. Iacopino Manchester, NH

Wm. O. “Bill” James, Jr. Little Rock, AR

Evan A. Jenness Santa Monica, CA

Rick Jones New York, NY

Elizabeth Kelley Cleveland, OH

Mark J. Mahoney Buffalo, NY

Ken Murray Phoenix, AZ

George H. Newman Philadelphia, PA

Kirk B. Obear Sheboygan, WI

Timothy P. O’Toole Washington, DC

Mark P. Rankin Tampa, FL

Martin A. Sabelli San Francisco, CA

Maria H. Sandoval San Juan, PR

Mark A. Satawa Southfield, MI

Marvin E. Schechter New York, NY

Gail Shifman San Francisco, CA

David B. Smith Alexandria, VA

Penelope S. Strong Billings, MT

Jeffrey E. Thoma Fairfield, CA

Jennifer Lynn Thompson Nashville, TN

Geneva Vanderhorst Washington, DC

Deja Vishny Milwaukee, WI

C. Rauch Wise Greenwood, SC

Solomon L. Wisenberg Washington, DC

Executive Director

Norman L. Reimer Washington, DC