



# NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

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December 1, 2002

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Dear Fellow Sheriff,

We all recognize the dangers of drug abuse in our society and sheriffs are on the front line of the "War on Drugs". NSA believes a strong commitment to drug enforcement coupled with proven prevention and treatment programs will help stem the tide of drug abuse in our society. That is why I write to you today.

Marijuana is a dangerous drug and addiction rates of marijuana are a serious problem facing our society. Nationally, no other drug matches the threat posed by marijuana. According to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), out of 16 million drug users in America, about 77 percent use marijuana, and 60 percent of teenagers in treatment have a primary marijuana diagnosis. In other words, addiction to marijuana by our youth exceeds their addiction rates for alcohol, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, ecstasy and all other illegal drugs combined.

The threat is real and pro-marijuana forces are seeking to downplay the risks. They are well funded and highly skilled at manipulating the media and corrupting our youth. Their seductive message lulls society into complacency. As elected leaders in our communities, we cannot stand by and let those who want to legalize drugs go unchallenged. We must stand up and voice the truth about marijuana.

NSA's policy resolution on legalization is clear. We strongly oppose ballot efforts to legalize Schedule I addictive drugs for so-called medical purposes. However, it is not enough to merely state policy. We must become engaged in the fight.

Accompanying this letter is information from ONDCP that will help you dispel the myths about marijuana. I encourage you to be active and vigilant on this issue. The pro-marijuana interests are skilled and stealthy. It is our job as elected leaders and law enforcement officials to keep our communities safe from this scourge. Please do your part.

Sincerely,

William T. Ferrell  
President

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