



# Weekly Hot News Update

April 9, 2008

Volume 4, Number 14

## On the Hill

Here's what we're tracking this week for the National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition.

### *Bills of Interest:*

**H. Res 108** - Supporting the Weed and Seed and COPS programs

- This resolution was introduced in the House and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

**HR 253** - No More Tulias: Drug Law Enforcement Evidentiary Standards Improvement Act of 2007

- This bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary and further referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.

**HR 365/S 635** - Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007

- This bill was made public law on December 21, 2007. Public Law Number 110-143.

**HR 405** - Family-Based Meth Treatment Access Act of 2007

- This bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce and to its subcommittee on Health.

**HR 1069/S 144** - Mynisha's Law

- This bill was introduced in the House and Senate and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. In the House it was also referred to the Committee on Education and Labor and to its Subcommittee on Healthy Families and Communities.
- This bill is to provide Federal coordination and assistance in preventing gang violence.

**HR 1585** - A bill to authorize appropriations for FY 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for FY 2007, and for other purposes.

- The provisions of the House and Senate Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations bills, S 1745 and HR 3093, were tabled and included in a conference report in this bill.
- Pocket vetoed by the President on December 31, 2007 and returned to the House for debate.

**HR 2542** - To authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to make grants to hire, train, and equip local law enforcement officials on and near the southern border of the United States.

- The bill was introduced to the House and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

**HR 3462** - A bill to improve the tools available to prosecute certain violent crimes.

- Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

**S 132** - Methamphetamine Trafficking Enforcement Act of 2007

- This bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

**S 231/ HR 3546** - To authorize the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program at fiscal year 2006 levels through 2012

- This bill passed the Senate and was introduced in the House and referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.

**S 267** - Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007

- This bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

- S 393 - Emergency Local Law Enforcement Byrne Assistance Act of 2007
  - This bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.
- S 635 - Methamphetamine Research Remediation Act
  - A Congressional Budget Office cost estimate was released for the bill on June 12th, as ordered reported by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.
  - The Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works filed a report on the bill (S.Rept. 110-207) on October 26, 2007.
- S 1276 - Methamphetamine Production Prevention Act of 2007
  - This bill will establish a grant program to facilitate the creation of methamphetamine precursor electronic logbook systems.
  - This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

#### *Hearings of Interest:*

April 10 @ 10:00am in 192 Dirksen - Senate Appropriations Committee, Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on FY2009 appropriations for the Justice Department.

Witnesses: Attorney General Michael Mukasey testifies

#### *Whispers from Congress:*

Earmark reform efforts in the Senate are running into a formidable obstacle: the chairman. Chairman Byrd (D-WV) is a noted earmarker who is said to have half of the buildings in West Virginia named after him because he has been responsible for obtaining funding for them through the annual appropriations process. In his latest reform block, Byrd has resisted calls from a near-unanimous Republican caucus to implement new accountability standards for earmarks, including having the items listed in the actual bill language instead of report language as they are now. As long as the irascible Byrd occupies the chairman's seat on the Appropriations Committee, don't expect too much change. Separately, the Hill will be dominated the first part of this week by Senate testimony from General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker regarding Iraq. The storyline is that they will be facing their next commander in chief, because Senators McCain, Clinton, and Obama will all be present at the hearings to ask questions.

## *Inside the Administration*

Condi Rice is testifying this week before the CJS appropriations subcommittee and the focus is likely to be on Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran. However, some members of the panel are likely to raise issues related to the Latin American drug threat. A Washington Post story on Venezuela from over the past weekend indicated a new surprise push by the Chavez regime to crack down on traffickers who work with Colombian drug producers. The piece - which many are taking with a grain of salt - indicated that Venezuela has destroyed dozens of make-shift air strips used by planes ferrying narcotics. This is not likely a seismic shift in Venezuela's behind-the-scenes position on Colombian trafficking and FARC involvement, but possibly an effort to address domestic Venezuelan concerns that violence has been increasing. Given the current state of US-Venezuelan relations, don't expect much assistance from the US to the Venezuelans.

## *Washington Influences*

Anti-drug-war voices seem to be popping up with greater frequency lately. The latest missive was published in southern Utah's Spectrum newspaper by a member of the group "Law Enforcement Against Prohibition". The member, a former law enforcement officer, railed against policies that, in his mind, just amplify the already negative consequences of drug abuse. Some Utah drug enforcement agents believe he used flawed analogies and compared apples to oranges in discussing these consequences, and these agents are eager to respond to the arguments. This echoes the sentiments of Alabama drug enforcement agents who were dismayed to see an op-ed published in a local paper a number of weeks ago by a Maryland-

based member of the same Law Enforcement Against Prohibition group. LEAP members around the country have been placing more and more op-eds and news stories in local papers. Expect the effort - the financial support for which is unknown - to continue as international and domestic programs related to counternarcotics operations are reviewed in the next two years by the US Congress, and as the political landscape in Washington shifts.

## ***Around the Corner***

Democratic leadership is pointing to a mid-May timeframe for passage of the war supplemental appropriations bill. Hearings this week before both the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees will kick off a six-week effort on the Hill to focus on Iraq and Afghanistan issues leading up to consideration of the supplemental. This week, Senate Republican Whip Jon Kyl (R-AZ) indicated that Senate Republican leadership will push for a “clean” supplemental - meaning that they will support funding in the bill only if it supports the war effort. This means that they will likely actively oppose additions of domestic spending to the bill. While some had been indicating that this would be the case, Kyl’s statement made the position clear. Despite this stance, the appropriations subcommittee chairmen in the Senate are discussing with full committee Chairman Byrd possible add-ons. Byrd is said to be luke-warm to the proposals because he is unwilling to “re-open” the FY 2008 omnibus appropriations bill. This bill cut many programs that various senators and outside groups are pushing to restore through the supplemental. Decisions will likely be made in the next two-three weeks on including non-war items.

## **Selected News for the National Narcotics Officer’s Association’s Coalition**

- [SENATORS SEEK TO RESTORE LAW ENFORCEMENT FUNDING](#)
- [Charges allege baby drank meth from bottle](#)
- [Man gets 20-year sentence for meth delivery](#)
- [Meth documentary to be aired on TV](#)
- [U.S. Sen. Grassley: Congress should restore funding for Byrne/JAG Grants](#)
- [Coalition making progress in fight against illegal drugs](#)

### **The Lighter Side**

*Quote of the Week*

***“Well done, is twice done.”  
-Benjamin Franklin***

***“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”***

***-Winston Churchill***

### **Contact Us**

<http://www.charlesgroupdc.com>  
[info@charlesgroupdc.com](mailto:info@charlesgroupdc.com)