

Cass County-Logansport Drug Task Force
100 Court Park
Logansport, Indiana 46947
574-753-7800

February 3, 2004

Members of Criminal Government Reform Committee
Sub-Committee On Criminal Justice
Drug Policy and Human Resources

Dear Members:

In response to your letter of January 27, 2004, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to the methamphetamine problem here in Cass County and Logansport, Indiana.

I have currently been assigned to the Cass County-Logansport Drug Task Force for the last five years. During my assignment, the first meth lab our Drug Task encountered was in January of 2000. Since that time we are averaging over twelve labs a year. Since the beginning of the year we have uncovered two labs in less than thirty days of the new year. At that rate we will exceed twenty labs for the year 2004, which is almost double for last year.

In August 2003, a subject from Walton, Indiana was arrested in Oklahoma with over three pounds of methamphetamine which was to be distributed in Cass County. In January of 2004, a subject was arrested in Iowa with over three pounds of crystal meth (Ice) which was intended to be sold in Cass County. DEA Units and Task Force Units staked out the delivery point in Logansport. This would equal a street value in excess of \$50,000.

Anhydrous ammonia thefts have increased over the last year and Task Force units have had to work overtime to perform surveillance on these distribution locations of local businesses. Theft of precursors at local retail stores has doubled in the last year. For example: a young woman had seven starting fluid cans hid in her baby's stroller at the time of her arrest.

The Cass County Probation Department has over 1200 probationers. They have had a five percent increase of positive tests for methamphetamine for 2003.

Also, there has been an increase in the purchase of syringe usage which indicates more an increase in injections of methamphetamine.

The production of methamphetamine has become more sophisticated in the past months. The last two meth labs that were uncovered, the defendants have had video cameras on the exterior buildings, telescopes, two-way radios, night vision., and radio RF

detectors. Most defendants producing meth have better equipment than the local law enforcement.

Further, the defendants are using counter surveillance on the Drug Task Force Office and the officer's vehicles.

The Drug Task Force unit desperately need video and audio equipment, vehicles, and more man power to fight the ever increasing methamphetamine problem in our community. I would like to see a multi-county Drug Task Force be federally funded. The production of methamphetamine has become very mobile. With a multi-county Drug Task Force the counties involved would be exchange information, have more man power in trying to locate these portable meth labs.

This problem is not going to go away anytime soon and is reaching epidemic proportions. Thank you for your interest in this problem.

Sincerely yours,

Sgt. Jeff Schnepf
Cass County-Logansport Drug Task Force