CADCA®

March 27, 2009

The Honorable Ricardo H. Hinojosa
Acting Chair, U.S. Sentencing Commission
One Columbus Circle, NE
Suite 2-500, South Lobby
Washington, DC 20002-8002

Dear Chair Hinojosa:

On behalf of Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) and our more than 5,000 coalition members nationwide, I would like to express our strong support for the Ryan Haight Act, and the increase in criminal penalties for illegal online pharmacies, pharmacists and doctors who become involved in criminal activity.

Prescription (Rx) drug abuse is on the rise at an alarming rate in the United States, where in 2008, 15.4% of 12th grade students reported abusing Rx drugs in the last year,[1] and Rx and Over-the-Counter Drugs accounted for 7 of the 11 most frequently abused drugs.[2] Teens have also developed the misperception that Rx drugs are safer than street drugs,[3] while more people who used drugs for the first time in 2007 tried Rx drugs illicitly, than tried marijuana.[4]

Community anti-drug coalitions work everyday to reduce illicit drug use and underage drinking by partnering with all sectors of the community (*e.g.*, schools, law enforcement, parents, businesses, etc.) to successfully prevent and combat substance abuse, but are limited without a comprehensive approach, that includes appropriate criminal penalties for those involved in illegally selling Rx drugs online or in the community.

In light of your review of the penalties associated with the sale of Schedule III – V Rx drugs, on behalf of CADCA and its 5,000 members, I would encourage you to consider raising the currently low penalties associated with selling prescriptions illegally, in the Federal Court system. Thank you for considering my views on this important subject.

Sincerely,

Arthur T. Dean
Major General, U.S. Army, Retired
Chairman and CEO

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[1] Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2008, December 11). *Various stimulant drugs show continuing gradual declines among teens in 2008, most illicit drugs hold steady.* University of Michigan News Service, Ann Arbor, 57 pp. Available: http://monitoringthefuture.org/pressreleases/08drugpr.pdf

[2] Ibid

[3] Friedman, R. (2006). The New England Journal of Medicine, The Changing Face of Teenage Drug Abuse: The Trend Toward Prescription Drugs. Available: http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/extract/354/14/1448

[4] Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies. (2008). *Results from the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings* (NSDUH Series H-34, DHHS Publication No. SMA 08-4343). Rockville, MD. Available: http://www. oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh/2k7nsduh/2k7Results.cfm#TOC

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