

July 25, 2007

WASHINGTON, DC-U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) today announced that the U.S. House of Representatives approved \$100,000 for the South Coast Interagency Narcotics Task Force (SCINT), \$350,000 for Lane County Meth Abatement Initiative, and \$100,000 for Lane County Adult Corrections Mental Health Recidivism Project. The funding, which was requested by DeFazio earlier this year, was included in the fiscal year 2008 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. The bill was passed by a vote of 281-142.

"Methamphetamine has devastated the lives of too many Oregonians and their families," DeFazio said. "Communities throughout Oregon and the U.S. will face untold costs in responding to the human, environmental and health consequences of this scourge for years to come. I'm pleased I was able to get funding for these important programs to help fight this growing epidemic."

The South Coast Interagency Narcotics Team (SCINT) was formed in 1988. It is a multi-jurisdictional narcotics task force comprised of each city police department, county sheriff's office, district attorney's office and members of the Oregon State Police in Coos, Curry and Western Douglas Counties. SCINT allows these law enforcement agencies to be more effective and efficient in thwarting illegal drug trafficking by pooling their resources. The \$100,000 in federal assistance will help the team continue to conduct aggressive methamphetamine investigations, gather intelligence and take enforcement actions to stop trafficking, distribution and use of methamphetamines along the south coast.

The Lane County Methamphetamine Abatement Initiative is a public-private partnership designed to develop and provide comprehensive strategies for methamphetamine treatment, prevention, prosecution and environmental rehabilitation. Methamphetamine abuse is a widespread problem in Oregon. The state treats more people per capita for methamphetamine addiction than any other state in the country and is consistently ranked in the top 10 states nationally for meth lab seizures. Within Oregon, Lane County ranks second for meth seizures. In 2004, 2,062 Lane County adults and 160 youth entered treatment for methamphetamine addiction. This epidemic has had a tremendous economic impact on the county. The \$350,000 included in the bill will help support the law enforcement and drug treatment components of this important program.

The Lane County Adult Corrections Mental Health Recidivism program is intended to help adult offenders with low-level criminality and mental illness stay out of jail. The \$100,000 in federal assistance will be used in conjunction with the existing defendant and offender management program, and specifically target inmates with diagnosable mental illnesses. The goal is to reduce the number of mentally ill people in the Lane County Jail and to keep the mentally ill from re-offending.

The Senate must now take up the fiscal year 2008 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.