



R-23

Date: April 16, 2005

To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

From: Patrick O'Donnell, 4th District Councilmember
Bonnie Lowenthal, 1st District Councilmember
Val Lerch, 9th District Councilmember

Subject: **A Plan to Fight Crystal Meth**

Recommended Action

Request that the Public Safety Advisory Commission report to the Public Safety Committee in 60 days with their recommendations on how the City can fight the increasing problem of methamphetamine use in Long Beach and related crime.

Background

The scourge of methamphetamine use, or Crystal Meth, is a growing problem nationally and here in Long Beach. Meth is cheap, easy to make, widely available and has up to a 12 hour long high. These characteristics have skyrocketed meth use and have made it accessible and attractive to younger and younger generations. The children of these meth addicts are the real victims. They live in squalor, watch their parents shoot drugs and are exposed to a variety of chemicals at meth labs set up in their homes.

Home-based labs are easily constructed and the ingredients to produce methamphetamine are purchased at any supermarket or corner store. Over-the-counter cold medicines containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine and other materials are "cooked" in meth labs to make methamphetamine. Other everyday ingredients used in making meth include drain cleaner, battery acid, and antifreeze.

The Public Safety Advisory Commission ("PSAC") was created to make advisory policy recommendations to the City Council on public safety issues. We request

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that within their report to Council that PSAC address the following:

- Feasibility of restricting over the counter sale of drugs containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine;
- Effectiveness of programs in Long Beach and in other communities across the nation to combat meth use;
- How the increase in meth use is being addressed by our criminal justice system within the context of Proposition 36; and
- Measures that the Police Department can implement to address meth use and related crimes.