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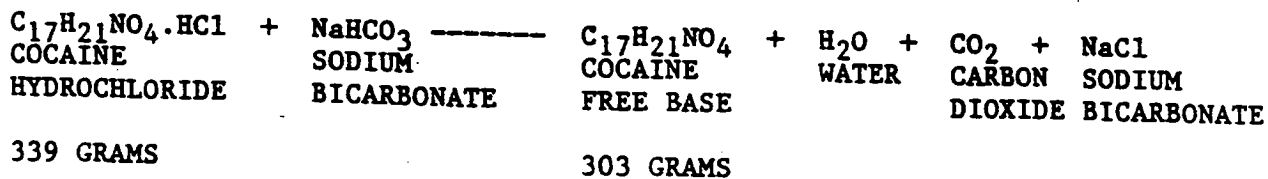
ATTORNEY SUZANNE HASHIMI
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DEAR ATTORNEY HASHIMI | United States
SENTENCING Commission

I READ AN ARTICLE IN THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION THAT STATED THAT YOU ARE PREPARING A CHALLENGE TO THE EXISTING CRACK LAW.

THE SENTENCING GUIDELINES MAKE 1 GRAM OF CRACK EQUIVALENT TO 100 GRAMS OF POWDER COCAINE. I AM CHEMIST. WHEN COCAINE IS PROCESSED IN COLOMBIA IT IS CHANGED FROM THE LEAVES TO A COCAINE BASE CALLED BASURO. THEN, THE COCAINE BASE IS PROCESSED TO COCAINE HYDROCHLORIDE BY ADDING HYDROCHLORIC ACID. THE CHANGE TO THE HYDROCHLORIDE FORM IS MADE FOR TWO REASONS. ONE, THE HYDROCHLORIDE GIVES THE PRODUCT A GREATER SHELF LIFE. TWO, THE HYDROCHLORIDE MAKES THE COCAINE SOLUBLE IN WATER. THE COCAINE BASE IS NOT WATER SOLUBLE.

COCAINE FREE BASE(CRACK) IS MADE BY ADDING A BASE SUCH AS AMMONIA, SODIUM HYDROXIDE, OR SODIUM BICARBONATE(BAKING SODA) TO THE COCAINE HYDROCHLORIDE. THE HYDROCHLORIDE IS AN ACID WHICH IS NEUTRALIZED BY THE BASE. THE RESULT IS COCAINE FREE BASE. THE REASON THAT ONE CONVERTS THE HYDROCHLORIDE TO THE BASE IS THAT THE HYDROCHLORIDE VAPORIZES AT A TEMPERATURE OF APPROXIMATELY 190°CENTIGRADE; WHEREAS, THE FREE BASE VAPORIZES AT 95°CENTRIGRADE. SO, THE FREE BASE CAN BE CHANGED INTO A SMOKE AT A LOWER TEMPERATURE. THE STOICHIOMETRIC CHEMICAL EQUATION IS LISTED BELOW.



THE CHEMICAL EQUATION SHOWS THAT 303 GRAMS OF FREE BASE IS PRODUCED FROM 339 GRAMS OF COCAINE HYDROCHLORIDE. THE RATIO OF POWDER COCAINE(HYDROCHLORIDE) TO FREE BASE(CRACK) IS 1.11 TO 1, NOT THE 100 TO 1 RATIO STATED IN THE GUIDELINE.

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COCAINE CAN BE USED IN THREE WAYS. IN ORDER TO BE EFFECTIVE, COCAINE MUST ENTER THE BLOODSTREAM. COCAINE THAT IS INHALED IS ABSORBED THROUGH THE NASAL MUCOSA IN THE NOSE, AND THROUGH THE ALVEOLAR-CAPILLARY MEMBRANE IN THE LUNGS, MAKING ITS WAY INTO THE BLOODSTREAM. COCAINE THAT IS SMOKED PASSES THROUGH THE ALVEOLAR-CAPILLARY MEMBRANE TO THE BLOODSTREAM. HOWEVER, WHEN COCAINE IS INJECTED INTRAVENOUSLY WITH A NEEDLE, IT GOES DIRECTLY INTO BLOODSTREAM.

POWDER COCAINE CAN BE USED IN ALL THREE WAYS. IT CAN BE INHALED AS A POWDERED SUBSTANCE. POWDER COCAINE CAN BE SMOKED DIRECTLY AS IT COMES IN THE HYDROCHLORIDE FORM, OR IT CAN BE CONVERTED TO FREE BASE AND SMOKED. SINCE POWDER COCAINE IS READILY SOLUBLE IN WATER, IT CAN BE USED IN THE MOST DIRECT AND POTENT WAY. POWDER COCAINE CAN BE DISSOLVED IN WATER AND INJECTED DIRECTLY INTO THE BLOODSTREAM. SMOKING COCAINE IS THE SECOND, NOT THE FIRST, MOST POTENT WAY OF USING COCAINE.

COCAINE FREE BASE CAN BE USED IN ONLY ONE WAY. SINCE COCAINE FREE BASE IS NOT WATER SOLUBLE, IT CAN ONLY BE SMOKED. THE FREE BASE CANNOT BE USED IN THE MOST POTENT WAY--INJECTION. ONLY COCAINE HYDROCHLORIDE(POWDER) CAN BE DISSOLVED IN WATER AND INJECTED DIRECTLY INTO THE BLOODSTREAM. ALSO, COCAINE FREE BASE CANNOT BE INHALED BECAUSE IT IS INSOLUBLE IN THE FLUIDS OF THE NOSE AND LUNGS. IF COCAINE FREE BASE WERE INHALED, IT WOULD REMAIN IN THE NOSE AND LUNGS AS INSOLUBLE PARTICLES.

IF POWDER COCAINE CAN BE SMOKED, WHY IS IT CONVERTED INTO COCAINE FREE BASE BEFORE IT IS SMOKED? COCAINE IS CONVERTED FROM POWDER TO FREE BASE BECAUSE THE FREE BASE TURNS INTO SMOKE AT A LOWER TEMPERATURE, MAKING IT EASIER TO SMOKE.

IF THE SOCIAL RAMIFICATIONS ARE EXPLORED, WE CAN CONCLUDE THAT SMOKING CRACK DIVERTS USERS FROM INTRAVENEOUS INJECTION OF SOLUBLE POWDER COCAINE. FEWER INTRAVENEOUS USERS RESULTS IN FEWER CONTAMINATED NEEDLES WITH THE CORRESPONDING RISK FOR AIDS.

LET US ASSUME THAT THE SENTENCING GUIDELINES RATIO , 1 GRAM OF CRACK EQUALS 100 GRAMS OF POWDER COCAINE, IS CORRECT. A PERSON COULD INHALE APPROXIMATELY 10 TO 20 PUFFS OF SMOKE FROM 1 GRAM OF CRACK. ON THE OTHER HAND, WITH 100 GRAMS OF POWDER COCAINE, USING A DOSE OF 0.2 GRAM, A PERSON COULD INJECT HIMSELF 400 TO 500 TIMES. OR, A PERSON COULD SMOKE THE POWDER COCAINE DIRECTLY, WITHOUT CONVERSION TO THE FREE BASE. IF A PERSON DECIDED TO SMOKE 100 GRAMS OF POWDER COCAINE, HE COULD GET 1,000 DOSES(INHALATIONS), ASSUMING EACH INHALATION USES 0.1 GRAM.

IN CONCLUSION, NO SCIENTIFIC OR LOGICAL BASIS CAN JUSTIFY THE CURRENT CRACK LAW. CONSEQUENTLY, THE LAW SHOULD BE EXAMINED FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF RACIAL BIAS, WHICH SEEMS TO BE SUPPORTED BY STATISTICS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND CONSIDERATION OF THIS MATTER.

SINCERELY,

MICHAEL Y. TANAKA