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ATTN: Public Information
United States Sentencing Commission
One Columbus Circle N.E.
Suite 2-500 South Lobby
Washington, D.C. 20002-800

Gentlemen:

I am opposed to mandatory federal sentencing guidelines as I believe discretion should be left with the judge. Furthermore, the current war on drugs is a failure. Our prisons are overcrowded, courts are congested, violence is at a high level, the availability of drugs has not been reduced, and the whole thing is costing too much money. A new approach needs to be considered.

Be that as it may, I have some comments concerning the proposed amendments to the sentencing guidelines.

1. Drug purity. I support the new guideline which I understand would base the sentencing on the actual amount of the drug in a powder mixture instead of the entire mixture.

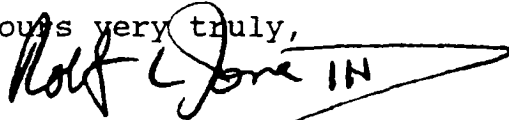
2. Methamphetamine enhancement. It is my information that methamphetamine is now enhanced five to one (1 gram met. -5 grams cocaine) for sentencing purposes as compared to cocaine. Is there a rational basis for this distinction? I thought both drugs were equally bad. One to one would seem to be the desired ratio.

3. Precursor chemicals. When labs are found but no drugs, a determination is made about how much drug could be produced with the chemicals on hand. I understand the current law is you calculate on a 100 percent yield using the most abundant chemical. I would think as a matter of practicality, it would only be possible to produce a drug in the amount of the least abundant chemical.

There are many people in our prisons for drug related offenses who have learned their lesson. They are not violent and not a threat to society. Therefore, it is important that these amendments be made retroactive to reduce the sentences of those in prison and to make room for violent offenders. Protecting society by removing the violent offenders from the street should be our number one priority.

Your consideration of these views is appreciated.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert L. Jones, III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Robert L. Jones, III

cp