

Ohio Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors Opposes State Ballot Issue 1

For Immediate Release - Alexandria, VA

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Ohio First Lady Hope Taft will address the annual conference of the Ohio Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (OAADAC) on Friday, Oct. 4, at noon in Cleveland. OAADAC is an affiliate of NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals, which is the nation's largest membership organization for addiction-focused health care professionals.

Mrs. Taft is nationally recognized for her drug abuse prevention work. She is leading opposition to Issue 1, a statewide constitutional ballot initiative that would eliminate judicial discretion in certain drug cases and give offenders the option of treatment instead of jail time. The measure will be decided by voters on Nov. 5.

NAADAC's Ohio affiliate opposes Issue 1 because the measure will overburden the current treatment system and undermine the state's drug court system.

"As addiction professionals we take treatment very seriously," John Lisy, president of OAADAC, said. "The number of individuals who need treatment, but cannot receive it due to a lack of capacity within the health care system is large and growing. Efforts that will overwhelm the treatment system will not help in providing appropriate care to those in need.

"NAADAC supports the drug court movement and wants to see it thrive. Issue 1 will hinder drug court efforts and infringe on judicial discretion. Public health policy, including alcohol and drug treatment, is too complex to be decided by sound bytes. The fact that those sound bytes are paid for by those whose ultimate goal is drug legalization is very disturbing."

Roger A. Curtiss, president of NAADAC, and John Avery, the national association's director of public policy, will also address the conference, which runs Oct. 2-4.

What: Ohio First Lady Hope Taft addresses OAADAC conference

Where: Holiday Inn (6001 Rockside Rd., Cleveland, OH 44131)

When: Friday, Oct. 4, 2002, 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.