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NEWS RELEASE –

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DENVER DA MCCANN TO MEET WITH FELLOW PROSECUTORS IN SEATTLE TO LEARN ABOUT DRUG OFFENDER DIVERSION PROGRAM

Denver District Attorney Beth McCann will join fellow prosecutors from around the country in Seattle this week to learn more about its drug diversion program—an alternative to prosecuting lower level drug crimes.

King County (Seattle) District Attorney Dan Satterberg and others will provide information about the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program, which allows officers to divert low-level (possession), non-violent drug offenders into community-based programs for treatment, rather than arresting them and initiating a criminal case. Denver Police Department representatives have visited the LEAD program in Santa Fe.

“Providing drug treatment and support is a much better option than warehousing addicts and low-level offenders in our jails and prisons,” District Attorney McCann said. “LEAD could be another tool we in Denver can utilize to make our communities safer.”

LEAD differs from Denver District Court’s Drug Court, in which an eligible drug offender who wants to take part in Drug Court pleads guilty to the charges and is immediately sentenced to Drug Court supervision involving mandatory drug treatment.

The conference will also cover restorative justice and immigrant issues.

The Tuesday-Wednesday conference is organized by the nonprofit Fair and Just Prosecution, a newly formed non-profit national support network of recently elected prosecutors committed to change and innovation as they seek to implement criminal justice system policy and practice reforms in their offices. District Attorney McCann is a member of the network. Boulder District Attorney Stan Garnett will also join DA McCann in Seattle.