

Anti-gang rally's message: enough is enough!

A community has come together to say "we're not afraid"

News1130 Staff SURREY (NEWS1130) | Sunday, February 22nd, 2009 1:30 pm



(Hundreds showed up for the rally at the Central City Plaza (News1130 Photo))

Politicians, police officers and those who've been directly and indirectly affected by gang violence gathered at Central City Plaza in Surrey for an anti-gang rally.

Twenty-year-old Trevor Loke is one of the organizers and says the goal was for people to come together and show gangs that they are not afraid, and it's hoped they'll get some ideas of how to deal with gang violence.

He says the rally proves we are stronger than the gangs trying to divide us. Speakers include Surrey Mayor Dianne Watts, MP Donna Cadman and some people directly affected by all the killing.

One of the solutions being offered to combat gang violence is to legalize marijuana. But the president of the Vancouver Police Union says that's not the answer to the problem. Tom Stamatakis says it doesn't matter if we legalize and regulate drugs or not.

"If the government got in the business of imposing tax on the sale of those drugs, we'd still have people producing them illicitly and selling them on the black market because there's no way creating a government bureaucracy would be able to compete with someone throwing together a grow op in a house, for example."

Stamatakis says the demand for drugs is so high, we'd still be left with a huge enforcement problem. He says you only have to look at the amount of time law enforcement spends dealing with the illegal distribution of cigarettes and alcohol to see that it would be an ongoing issue.