

November 22, 2023

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
Chairman
Senate Committee on Banking, Housing,
and Urban Affairs
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tim Scott
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Banking, Housing,
and Urban Affairs
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick McHenry
Chairman
House Committee on Financial Services
2129 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Maxine Waters
Ranking Member
House Committee on Financial Services
4340 O'Neill House Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Chairman
Senate Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

The Honorable Mike Rogers
Chairman
House Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ben Cardin
Chairman
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James Risch
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Michael McCaul
Chairman
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gregory Meeks
Ranking Member
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
2471 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Brown, McHenry, Reed, Rogers, Cardin, and McCaul and Ranking Members Scott, Waters, Wicker, Smith, Risch and Meeks:

We are writing to thank you for your work on the bipartisan Fentanyl Eradication and Narcotics Deterrence (FEND) Off Fentanyl Act (S. 1271). We look forward to this vital legislation being included in the Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) currently being negotiated.

We represent a broad coalition of stakeholders – families who have suffered the tragedy of losing a son or daughter from fentanyl poisoning, law enforcement officers who are combatting the deadly scourge of this fentanyl epidemic on America’s streets, and national security experts who recognize that more must be done to target the transnational criminal organizations driving the illicit fentanyl trade.

We are united in this important fight because more must be done to protect and safeguard the lives of America’s children and families. **The FEND Off Fentanyl Act is an important step that Congress must take now.** We applauded its inclusion in the Senate-passed NDAA and urge you to come together once again in a bipartisan manner to ensure it becomes law. This important bill will impose sanctions on the transnational criminal organizations trafficking illicit fentanyl and its precursors as well as on the money laundering that facilitates it. It would also enhance anti-money laundering efforts and strengthen forfeiture authorities related to the drug trade.

The fentanyl epidemic is growing deadlier by the day. Out of almost 107,000 U.S. drug overdose deaths in 2021, nearly two-thirds involved synthetic opioids other than methadone (primarily fentanyl). This category of opioid, primarily made up of fentanyl and fentanyl analogs, was found to be, “the main driver of drug overdose deaths with a nearly 7.5-fold increase from 2015 to 2021,” by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. The U.S. drug overdose death toll for 2022 is nearly 110,000, mostly from synthetic drugs like fentanyl, making it the leading cause of death for Americans ages 18-49.

As fentanyl deaths rise, China remains the primary source for its ingredients – known as chemical precursors – that Mexican criminal groups use to make the fentanyl that is killing Americans. Steps taken thus far have not decreased the flow of these illicit opioids into the United States. What’s more, Chinese money launderers have become a central element of the financial scheme facilitating the fentanyl epidemic. While the Biden administration recently announced an agreement with China to crack down on the fentanyl trade, the FEND Off Fentanyl Act ensures that those aiding the cartels will face the full force of U.S. sanctions. This legislation is a step forward in our shared fight to combat this epidemic. With inclusion of the FEND Off Fentanyl Act, we can more effectively target those groups and individuals responsible for spreading this poison. This could save the lives of thousands of young Americans.

We thank you again for your leadership and urge you to ensure the FEND Off Fentanyl Act is included in the final FY24 NDAA. America’s children and families are counting on your support.

Sincerely,

National Association of Police Organizations

www.napo.org

FDD Action

www.fddaction.org

National Tactical Officers Association

www.ntoa.org

David L. Asher, Ph.D

Senior Fellow

*Hudson Institute**

National Sheriffs’ Association

www.sheriffs.org

Victims of Illicit Drugs Inc. (VOID)

www.stopthevoid.org

MAPDA Action

www.MAPDA.net

Nate Sibley

Research Fellow

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**Affiliation listed for reference only.*

CC: The Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, House Minority Leader
The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Minority Leader