



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

April 27, 2017

The Honorable Edward Markey
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Markey,

On behalf of the Major Cities Chiefs Association, representing 69 of the largest metropolitan law enforcement agencies in the Nation, we would like to express our strong support for S. 708, the International Narcotics Trafficking Emergency Response by Detecting Incoming Contraband with Technology (INTERDICT) Act.

The National Institute of Drug Abuse defines fentanyl as a powerful synthetic opioid analgesic that can be up to 100 times more potent than morphine. The drug is so dangerous, that even a few, tiny grains of it can kill those who come in contact with it by shutting down their respiratory systems. Sadly, opiates contributed to the deaths of more than 23,000 people in 2013 alone. The following year, that number increased by 72 percent.

Whether it's police officers who find fentanyl on suspects during a drug raid, or Custom and Border Protection (CBP) agents who are making arrests, law enforcement officers are at great risk of being exposed to such life-threatening substances. Contributing to the urgency of the situation is the growing prevalence of fentanyl in the U.S. The drug is relatively inexpensive, which allows drug traffickers to mass produce pills for fentanyl and import them from as far away as China at little cost.

The INTERDICT Act will ensure that CPB has additional portable chemical screening devices at ports of entry and in laboratories. It will provide CBP with sufficient resources, facilities and personnel-including scientists who can interpret screening test results from the field. Finally, the measure will authorize the appropriation of \$15 million for new technology, laboratory equipment and additional personnel.

The Major Cities Chiefs Association stands with you on this important matter, and appreciates your efforts to stop the flow of deadly synthetic opioids into our country. We look forward to working with you on this potentially life-saving legislation and other critical issues in the future.

Sincerely,

J. Thomas Manger
Chief of Police
Montgomery County Police Department
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association

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