



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

January 22, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Whip
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Minority Whip
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Doug Collins
Ranking Member
House Judiciary Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Majority Whip Hoyer, Minority Whip Scalise, Chairman Nadler, and Ranking Member Collins,

I write to register the Major Cities Chiefs Association's (MCCA) support of S. 3201, the *Temporary Reauthorization and Study of the Emergency Scheduling of Fentanyl Analogues Act*. MCCA membership is comprised of Chiefs and Sheriffs of the sixty-nine largest law enforcement agencies in the United States and nine largest in Canada. Collectively the MCCA represents over 79.9 million people and a workforce of 251,082 officers and non-sworn personnel.

Over the past few years, the opioid epidemic has wreaked havoc on communities throughout the United States. The dramatic increase in drug overdose deaths that accompanied this crisis can be partially traced to fentanyl, a synthetic opioid. For example, in 2016, there were more than 60,000 drug overdose deaths in the United States. Of these overdoses, 42,249 involved opioids, and of those deaths, 45.9 percent involved synthetic opioids such as fentanyl.¹

¹“Overdose Death Rates,” *National Institute on Drug Abuse*, January 2019.

<<https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/overdose-death-rates>>;

Attorney General William Barr, “Fentanyl could flood the country unless Congress passes this bill,” *The Washington Post*, January 10, 2020. <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/william-barr-congress->

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The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) took action to classify fentanyl and its analogues as a Schedule 1 controlled substance. This scheduling is temporary and is set to expire on February 6th. S. 3201 will extend the temporary scheduling of the fentanyl class for an additional 15 months, until May 6, 2021, providing Congress, the Administration, and other stakeholders additional time to develop a more permanent solution.

If the current scheduling of the fentanyl class is allowed to expire, the United States risks opening itself up to a flood of new fentanyl analogues. Specifically designed to skirt current law, these analogues are slight molecular variations of fentanyl and despite being just as dangerous as traditional fentanyl, are technically new, non-scheduled, and non-controlled substances. Furthermore, if the scheduling of the fentanyl class lapses, the penalties for manufacturing, trafficking, and distributing fentanyl and its analogues will be severely diminished. Classifying the fentanyl class as a Schedule I controlled substance is a strong deterrent to criminals that should be maintained.

For the reasons outlined above, MCCA strongly encourages the House to take up and pass S. 3201 as quickly as possible. We look forward to working with you to advance this important piece of legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact me at art.acevedo@houstonpolice.org if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,



Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association