



## MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

January 23, 2020

The Honorable Pat Toomey  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sen. Toomey,

I write to register the Major Cities Chiefs Association's (MCCA) support of S. 400, the *Blocking Deadly Fentanyl Imports 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.<sup>1</sup>

While the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) decision to classify fentanyl and its analogues as a Schedule 1 controlled substance has helped stem the tide of synthetic opioids flowing into the United States, there is more that must be done. This is especially true considering that the DEA's scheduling is temporary and without further Congressional action, it will expire on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The *Blocking Deadly Fentanyl Imports Act* will address current gaps in US counternarcotics laws by adding countries who are significant sources of illicit fentanyl, fentanyl analogues or their precursors to the "Majors List." The potential foreign aid restrictions associated with being on the "Majors List" will raise the stakes for the nations that are flooding our communities with these destructive and addictive drugs and encourage them to do everything in their power to ensure they are not safe havens for producers and traffickers of fentanyl. Further limiting the supply will only serve to assist local law enforcement's efforts to combat the scourge of synthetic opioids at home.

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<sup>1</sup>"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-pass-this-bill-so-we-can-attack-the-onslaught-of-illegal-fentanyl/2020/01/10/cbb8ccdc-33cb-11ea-a053-dc6d944ba776\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/william-barr-congress-pass-this-bill-so-we-can-attack-the-onslaught-of-illegal-fentanyl/2020/01/10/cbb8ccdc-33cb-11ea-a053-dc6d944ba776_story.html)>

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Thank you for your work on this issue. The MCCA looks forward to working with you to advance this important piece of legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [art.acevedo@houstonpolice.org](mailto:art.acevedo@houstonpolice.org) if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Art Acevedo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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