

**December 11, 2019**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL URGES CONGRESS TO PERMANENTLY CLASSIFY ILLICIT FENTANYL COMPOUNDS AS SCHEDULE I DRUGS**

***Raoul & 55 Attorneys General Support Federal Classification of Powerful Opioids as Drugs That Have High Potential for Abuse and No Medical Uses***

**Chicago** — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today joined in a coalition of all 56 attorneys general in calling for Congress to permanently classify illicit fentanyl-related substances as Schedule I drugs. [In a letter to the chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee](#), Raoul and the coalition urge Congress to pass S. 2701, the Federal Initiative to Guarantee Health by Targeting (FIGHT) Fentanyl Act.

“Too often, illicit fentanyl-related compounds have played a role in the losses suffered as part of the opioid epidemic,” Raoul said. “By being diluted in black market opioids, these powerful substances are partially responsible for thousands of overdoses. Congress must act to ensure that all Americans are protected from these deadly substances.”

Schedule I drugs are defined as substances with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) issued a temporary scheduling order in February 2018 to schedule illicit fentanyl-related substances, which has allowed federal law enforcement authorities to bring criminal actions against individuals who manufacture, distribute or handle these substances. This scheduling order is set to expire on Feb. 6. The FIGHT Fentanyl Act codifies the DEA precedent to schedule illicit fentanyl-related substances, while allowing prescription fentanyl to remain usable by medical professionals.

The FIGHT Fentanyl Act will ensure law enforcement agencies and courts retain the tools needed to keep those who traffic in this deadly substance off the streets.

In the most recent data available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were 72,000 drug-related deaths in the United States in 2017. Of those deaths, roughly 40% involved fentanyl or a fentanyl-related compound.

This letter is part of Raoul’s ongoing efforts to combat the opioid epidemic and hold accountable companies whose deceptive practices have increased opioid prescriptions at the expense of public health. In April, Raoul’s office filed a lawsuit against opioid manufacturer Purdue Pharma for carrying out an aggressive and misleading marketing campaign to increase prescriptions of opioid painkillers as communities throughout Illinois and across the country faced an opioid addiction epidemic. In August, Raoul’s office expanded the lawsuit to include several members of the Sackler family, which founded and owns Purdue Pharma, for their roles in directing and approving the company’s misleading marketing efforts. Raoul has vowed to oppose any settlement with Purdue Pharma that does not address the Sackler family’s participation in creating the opioid crisis.

Raoul urges anyone who believes they or a loved one may be addicted to opioids to seek help by calling the Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances at [833-2FINDHELP](tel:833-2FINDHELP), which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Joining Raoul in sending the letter are attorneys general from every state, territory and the District of Columbia. The National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) also has chosen to endorse the legislation as one of its official policy positions.



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Committee on the Judiciary  
290 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Diane Feinstein  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: S. 2701 – Federal Initiative to Guarantee Health by Targeting (FIGHT) Fentanyl Act

Dear Senators Graham and Feinstein,

We write today to offer our collective support for S. 2701, the Federal Initiative to Guarantee Health by Targeting (FIGHT) Fentanyl Act.

As you are likely aware, the Drug Enforcement Agency's (DEA) temporary order classifying fentanyl-related compounds as Schedule I drugs is set to expire on February 6, 2020. The FIGHT Fentanyl Act would codify this temporary order, keeping fentanyl-related substances classified as Schedule I drugs.

In the most recent data available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were 72,000 drug-related deaths in the United States in 2017. Of those deaths, roughly 40% involved fentanyl or a fentanyl-related compound.

Just last month, a coalition of local, state, and federal agencies in Ohio intercepted over 20 kilograms of fentanyl, 1.5 kilograms of methamphetamine, and half a kilogram of heroin. Further testing revealed that the 20 kilograms of fentanyl were laced with carfentanil, which can be over 100 times more potent than fentanyl. The potency of the fentanyl-related substances in this single bust was enough to kill every man, woman, and child in the state of Ohio several times over.

This legislation is crucial to federal and state efforts to curb the opioid epidemic nationally and within each individual state. It is for these reasons that we commend Senators Portman and Manchin for their leadership in bringing forward this important legislation, and we urge you to take up and pass S. 2701 before the DEA's temporary order expires.

Yours,

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<http://www.naag.org/>



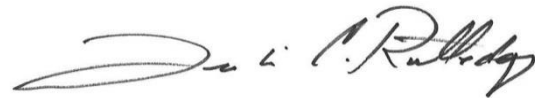
Dana Nessel  
Michigan Attorney General



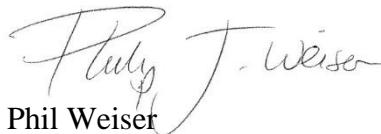
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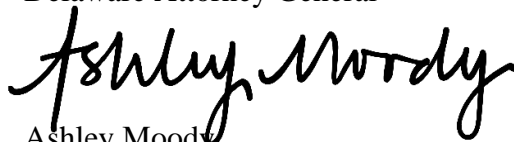
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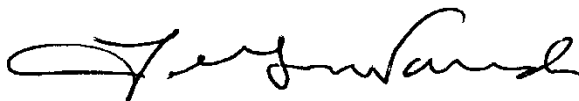
Kathleen Jennings  
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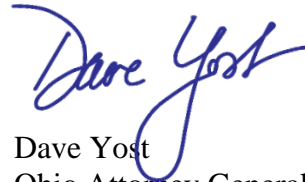
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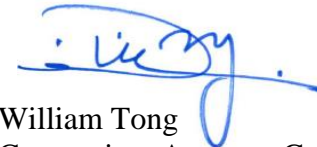
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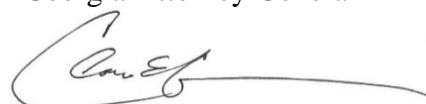
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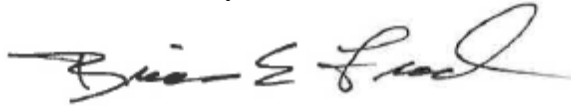
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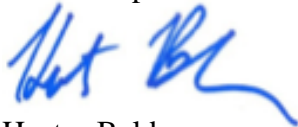
Eric S. Schmitt  
Missouri Attorney General



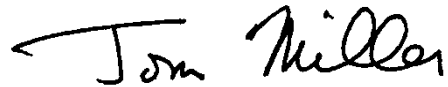
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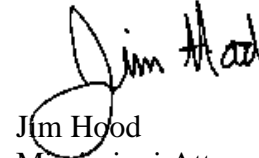
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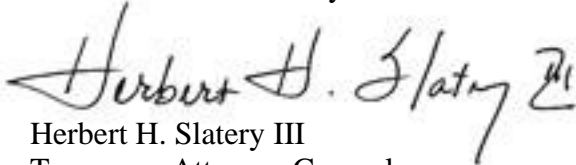
Ellen F. Rosenblum  
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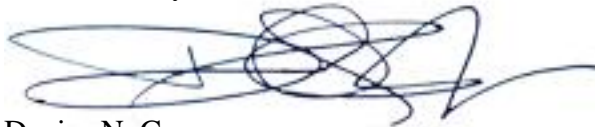
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South Carolina Attorney General



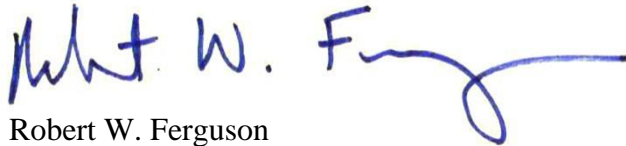
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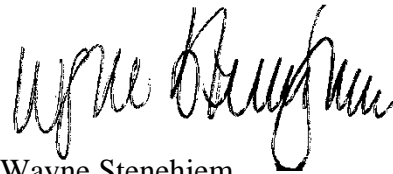
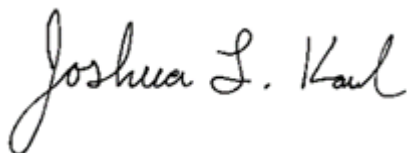
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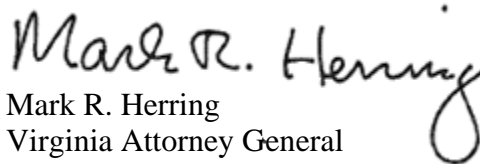
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Cc: Senator Rob Portman  
Senator Joe Manchin