



The Bipartisan HIDTA Reauthorization Act of 2024

The Problem: Without a secure border, harmful actors with international connections have continued to smuggle fentanyl and other illegal drugs, such as methamphetamine, into the United States. U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s Border Patrol seized 26,700 pounds of fentanyl along the southern border in 2023, a 480 percent increase compared to 2020.¹ However, these illegal drugs are still making it into the interior of the United States, and this influx of fentanyl led to over 112,000 deaths in the United States in 2023.²

The Solution: The Bipartisan HIDTA Reauthorization Act of 2024 would reform and reauthorize the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program to ensure local, state, and Federal law enforcement officials across the country have the tools and equipment to help get fentanyl and other illegal drugs off the streets to protect the communities they serve. It would also help ensure that fentanyl traffickers face prosecution for bringing in and distributing this illegal drug in the U.S. Specifically, the HIDTA Reauthorization Act would:

1. Reauthorize the HIDTA Program at \$302 million annually through Fiscal Year 2030, which is a \$22 million annual increase;
2. Create a new grant program within the HIDTA program that individual HIDTAs can apply for to enhance fentanyl seizure and interdiction activities;
3. Require reporting on coordination between law enforcement and immigration authorities to crack down on international drug cartels; and
4. Direct the U.S. Attorney General to assign not less than 16 assistant United States attorneys to individual HIDTAs, at a HIDTA’s request, to prioritize the investigation and prosecution of organizations and individuals trafficking fentanyl to ensure that these criminals are prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Background: Administered by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the HITDA Program is designed to increase information and resource sharing between local, state, and Federal law enforcement agencies to combat illegal drug trafficking in the United States. There are 33 individual HIDTAs across the United States, which collectively seized over 44 million dosage units of fentanyl and over 119 thousands kilograms of methamphetamine in 2022. The Central Valley California (CVC) HIDTA covers 15 counties, including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties, which are part of the 13th congressional district of California. In 2022, the CVC HIDTA seized over 1.4 million dosage units of fentanyl, 3,406 kilograms of methamphetamine, 355 kilograms of cocaine,

¹ <https://immigrationforum.org/article/illicit-fentanyl-and-drug-smuggling-at-the-u-s-mexico-border-an-overview/#:~:text=Border%20officials%20seized%204%2C600%20pounds,2023%20-%20a%20480%20percent%20increase>.

² <https://www.npr.org/2023/12/28/1220881380/overdose-fentanyl-drugs-addiction>

and 101 kilograms of heroin, among other illegal drugs, with a total value of more than \$2.9 billion, as well as disrupted or dismantled 38 drug trafficking/money laundering organizations of which 43% were international operations. The current HIDTA program expired at the end of Fiscal Year 2023 and needs to be reauthorized.

The Bottom Line: The HIDTA Reauthorization Act will equip our men and women in law enforcement with the necessary tools they need to combat the fentanyl epidemic the United States is facing.