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**NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION OPPOSES
DRUG IMPORTATION LEGISLATION WHICH
JEOPARDIZES LAW ENFORCEMENT'S ABILITY TO
PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENDANGERS THE SAFETY OF
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND OTHER FIRST RESPONDERS**

WHEREAS, the number of drug overdose deaths in 2016 likely exceeded 59,000, representing the largest annual increase in the drug overdose death count ever recorded in the United States, and which are the consequence of an escalating public health crisis: opioid addiction,ⁱ and;

WHEREAS, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) reported in 2016 that the sudden arrival of wholesale amounts of counterfeit prescription drugs containing fentanyl (fueled by China-sourced fentanyl into the United States via Canada and Mexico) will result in an increase in overdoses, deaths, and opiate-dependent individuals,ⁱⁱ and;

WHEREAS, local law enforcement are seeing fentanyl — with deadly results — in counterfeit prescription opioid medications,ⁱⁱⁱ and;

WHEREAS, the DEA reports that traffickers are expanding the fentanyl market to other counterfeit, non-opiate prescription medications (including benzodiazepine, prescribed for treating anxiety and insomnia), resulting in additional deaths,^{iv} and;

WHEREAS, the DEA warns that exposure to even minimal amounts (approximately 2 milligrams) of fentanyl can have deadly consequences for law enforcement officers, their canines, and other first responders,^v and;

WHEREAS, a report by former FBI Director Louis Freeh concluded that legislative drug importation proposals, if implemented, would open up the U.S. drug supply to adulterated and counterfeit drugs,^{vi} and;

WHEREAS, drug importation would, accordingly, worsen the opioid crisis, open up the U.S. pharmaceutical supply chain to adulterated and counterfeit drugs, further burden law enforcement, and endanger the safety of officers and other first responders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Sheriffs' Association opposes the passage of legislative drug importation proposals which would jeopardize law enforcement's ability to protect the public health; threaten the safety of our drug supply; and endanger law enforcement officers, their canines, and other first responders across America.

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- ⁱ New York Times (June 5, 2017), *Drug Deaths in America Are Rising Faster Than Ever*, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/06/05/upshot/opioid-epidemic-drug-overdose-deaths-are-rising-faster-than-ever.html>.
- ⁱⁱ Drug Enforcement Administration (July 2016), *Counterfeit Prescription Pills Containing Fentanyl: A Global Threat*, <https://www.dea.gov/docs/Counterfeit%20Prescription%20Pills.pdf>.
- ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. News and World Report (March 21, 2017), *32 Deaths in Metro Phoenix Attributed to Counterfeit Pills*, <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/arizona/articles/2017-03-21/32-deaths-in-metro-phoenix-attributed-to-counterfeit-pills>.
- ^{iv} Drug Enforcement Administration (July 2016), *supra*.
- ^v Drug Enforcement Administration (undated; viewed on July 25, 2017), *DEA Warning to Police and Public: Fentanyl Exposure Kills*, <https://ndews.umd.edu/sites/ndews.umd.edu/files/DEA%20Fentanyl.pdf>. Also, Drug Enforcement Administration (July 2016), *supra*.
- ^{vi} Freeh Group International Solutions, LLC (June 2017), *Report on the Potential Impact of Drug Importation Proposals on U.S. Law Enforcement*, https://storage.googleapis.com/m1738/20170605_Report%20on%20Counterfeit%20Drugs.pdf.