

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

On behalf of the thousands affected by the opioid epidemic, we urgently request that you consider two bipartisan bills, H.R. 6946, the Save Americans from the Fentanyl Emergency (SAFE) Act of 2022 and H.R. 7300, the Dark Web Interdiction Act of 2022, before the deadline for temporary scheduling expires on December 31, 2022.

Opioid overdose deaths reached over 100,000 in 2021 and are now the leading cause of death for American adults aged 18 to 45. As you know, opioids like fentanyl have claimed the lives of our family members, friends, and neighbors at alarming rates across the country. Confronting the ongoing opioid epidemic requires us to act on multiple fronts.

Fentanyl-related substances are currently temporarily scheduled as Schedule I under the Extending Temporary Emergency Scheduling of Fentanyl Analogues Act. This law extended the Drug Enforcement Agency's (DEA) temporary order to keep fentanyl-related substances in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. Unfortunately, the latest temporary extension is the seventh time Congress has extended DEA's temporary scheduling order. While temporary scheduling is a short-term remedy, the American people need a durable solution. Permanently scheduling synthetic opioids like fentanyl analogues is an essential step in ensuring the safety of at-risk Americans.

Online trafficking of fentanyl exacerbates the substance use disorder crisis that is devastating communities across the United States. The anonymity the internet provides has made it more difficult to identify and prosecute the individuals and organizations who administer or otherwise operate websites on the dark web that facilitate the distribution of illegal drugs. Since its creation in 2018, the Joint Criminal Opioid and Darknet Enforcement (J-CODE) task force has made hundreds of arrests worldwide, seized thousands of pounds of narcotics, and closed several dark web marketplaces. Making the J-CODE task force permanent is a critical step in ending fentanyl trafficking.

The SAFE Act and the Dark Web Interdiction Act will ensure law enforcement retains the tools they need to combat drug trafficking, help remove deadly substances, and keep communities safe. Congress has a duty to ensure the safety and stability of American citizens, including those suffering from substance use disorder, their families, and our communities. Passing the SAFE Act and the Dark Web Interdiction Act is a step towards reaching the end of the opioid epidemic.

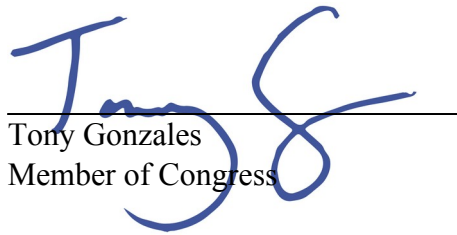
Sincerely,



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Ted Budd
Member of Congress



Tony Gonzales
Member of Congress