

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING
RON JOHNSON, WISCONSIN
THOM TILLIS, NORTH CAROLINA
MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

June 30, 2023

Mr. Troy A. Miller
Acting Commissioner
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20229

Dear Acting Commissioner Miller:

In the first six months of 2023, Oregon State troopers stopped millions of lethal doses of fentanyl speeding northbound on Interstate 5 and west along Interstate 84 for illegal distribution in my state. In just one month, traffic stops on Oregon interstate highways revealed deeply disturbing volumes of deadly fentanyl: 100,000 fentanyl laced pills and two pounds of powdered fentanyl outside La Grande,¹ eleven pounds of powdered fentanyl and 1,000 fentanyl laced pills in Marion County,² and 86 pounds of powdered fentanyl, along with methamphetamines, heroin, and cocaine outside of Salem.³ Despite this diligent law enforcement work, overdoses and deaths from fentanyl and fentanyl-laced drugs in Oregon have continued unabated.

The volume of fentanyl caught on Oregon highways illustrates the urgent need for continuing and intensive efforts to stop fentanyl and its precursors at the U.S. border. I understand that Customs and Border Protection (CBP), along with Homeland Security Investigation units are working to stop shipments at international mail facilities, express consignment hubs, land border ports of entry, and international airports. CBP reported significantly expanded seizures of fentanyl at the borders, from nearly 5,000 pounds in fiscal year (FY) 2019 to 14,700 pounds in FY 2022. CBP has already seized more than 19,000 pounds of fentanyl in 2023.⁴ Moreover, other federal government agencies are also cracking down. The Department of Justice has recently filed criminal charges targeting China-based companies and their employees that are

¹ Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), *Arizona Man Faces Federal Charges After Eastern Oregon Traffic Stop Yields 100,000 Fentanyl Pills, Two Pounds of Fentanyl Powder*, available:

<https://www.dea.gov/press-releases/2023/04/25/arizona-man-faces-federal-charges-after-eastern-oregon-traffic-stop>.

² DEA, *Federal Charges Filed Against Washington State Man Caught Trafficking Fentanyl Powder and Methamphetamine in Oregon*, available: <https://www.dea.gov/press-releases/2023/05/01/federal-charges-filed-against-washington-state-man-caught-trafficking>.

³ DEA, *Federal Charges Filed After Weekend Traffic Stop Nets 86 Pounds of Powdered Fentanyl*, available: <https://www.dea.gov/press-releases/2023/04/25/federal-charges-filed-after-weekend-traffic-stop-nets-86-pounds-powdered>.

⁴ CBP, *Drug Seizure Statistics*, available: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/drug-seizure-statistics>.

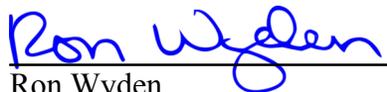
knowingly supplying precursor chemicals to the United States. The Department of Treasury has sanctioned nearly 100 individuals and entities for their role in the illicit fentanyl drug trade.

While I appreciate these efforts on the national level, much more needs to be done to stop drugs flooding the I-5 and I-84 corridors. Action must be taken directly in the communities ravaged by fentanyl. While local, state and federal law enforcement are hard at work separately, more can be done through cooperation.

Following my meeting with CBP officials, I am writing to ask that you strengthen and direct coordination and information-sharing between the CBP and Oregon state and local law enforcement agencies to better identify drug traffickers and dismantle their networks. Given that fentanyl or its precursors are being trafficked into the United States through known networks, I am seeking additional federal collaboration among drug enforcement efforts that will result in prosecution of illicit drug traffickers.

I look forward to hearing from you on this timely and sensitive topic.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator
Chairman, Committee on
Finance