



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
GENERAL FARM COMMODITIES, RISK MANAGEMENT,
AND CREDIT
COMMODITY MARKETS, DIGITAL ASSETS, AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

June 15, 2025

Jon Rice
Acting Director
Office of National Drug Control Policy
1800 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Acting Director Rice,

I write today to outline several proposals for the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to prioritize and implement while developing its *2026 National Drug Control Strategy (Strategy)*.

The evolving nature of the opioid epidemic – intensified by the rise of fentanyl pushed into our country from China – requires a concerted, adaptable, and coordinated response that strengthens law enforcement efforts to hold accountable traffickers and dealers, expands access to overdose treatments and prevention services, and fosters interagency collaboration. In mid-Michigan alone, hundreds of residents lose their lives to opioid overdoses each year.¹ Our communities are in need of sustained, comprehensive action to combat the ongoing opioid epidemic. The proposals below will help achieve that.

Combat the Flow of Drugs across the Southern Border

The resources needed to address the challenges at the southern, northern, and maritime borders far exceed local capacities and require robust federal support. Securing our borders effectively requires investment in advanced technology, solid infrastructure, and robust levels of trained personnel.

According to Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), 84% of fentanyl is smuggled through Southern Ports of Entry (POEs), highlighting the importance of increasing screening and drug enforcement at these locations. To better support CBP's drug enforcement efforts, ONDCP should encourage the High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Executive Boards along the southern border to strengthen their coordination with CBP and to hire more professionals focused specifically on drug interdiction.

¹Michigan Overdose Fatality Review (MiOFR) Program: [2023-24 Annual Activities Report](#)

Along with more personnel, it is imperative that we continue to increase HIDTA funding for cutting-edge tools to enhance drug interdiction at points of entry and within the United States. Examples include handheld scanning devices and automated license plate readers that make inspections faster and more effective. Effective screening tools have led to the seizure of thousands of pounds of fentanyl and hundreds of arrests, and I urge ONDCP to build on that success by working with CBP to expand these technologies to every major port of entry.

Address Officer Shortages with Bolstered Law Enforcement Tools & Training

Communities across the country are facing a serious law enforcement staffing crisis. In 2024, nearly 72% of Michigan local governments reported challenges recruiting qualified officers, and 48% percent said they were struggling to retain the officers they had. This shortage is especially pronounced in specialized areas like drug interdiction and border enforcement, where agencies are increasingly stretched thin.

To help address challenges with recruitment and retention, I encourage ONDCP to support the creation of regional training academies—potentially in partnership with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and/or the DEA—that focus on narcotics investigations, overdose response, and emerging drug threats. While HIDTA grants currently support training, overtime, and operational needs for existing personnel, expanding these opportunities will strengthen the recruitment pipeline and improve retention.

In addition, I ask that ONDCP ensure HIDTA programs continue to fund critical officer safety tools such as body armor, overdose response kits, and field drug testing devices. These resources not only protect officers in the field but also enable them to do their jobs more effectively.

Strengthening our law enforcement workforce is key to sustaining progress in fighting drug trafficking and keeping our communities safe.

Enhance Postal Interception Efforts

Postal Inspectors play a vital role in stopping the flow of drugs into our communities by intercepting packages, breaking up distribution networks, and assisting federal investigations with advanced forensic tools and intelligence. In fact, each year, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) seizes tens of thousands of pounds of illegal substances. However, too many packages slip through undetected, highlighting the ongoing need for increased coordination between ONDCP and USPIS.

To improve these efforts, I recommend that ONDCP conduct joint training programs for Postal Inspectors and HIDTA analysts focused on new trends in mail-based drug trafficking. ONDCP should also encourage all HIDTAs to conduct frequent and regular outreach with USPIS Inspectors within their area of operation for the sake of improving coordination between the two agencies. Strengthening these partnerships and improving information sharing will go a long way

in stopping fentanyl and other dangerous drugs from reaching our neighborhoods through the mail.

In addition, I propose that ONDCP provide funding opportunities to support local law enforcement partnerships with federal agencies to develop specialized screening teams focused on intercepting drug shipments before they're delivered. These frontline teams are critical to keeping drugs out of our communities.

Expand Access to Overdose Prevention Tools

Life-saving tools like naloxone and fentanyl test strips are making a real difference in saving lives amidst the opioid crisis. In 2023, expanded access to naloxone contributed to a 3% drop in overdose deaths, which was the first national decline in five years. Similarly, wider use of fentanyl test strips has been linked to a 7% reduction in opioid-related mortality. These tools are simple, effective, and proven to save lives. I urge ONDCP to continue and expand its efforts to make widely available naloxone and fentanyl test strips, with an emphasis on distribution in high-risk and rural areas. ONDCP should also invest in training for emergency responders and community organizations to help them recognize lethal doses and respond effectively to overdoses. Equipping communities with both the tools and the knowledge to act quickly is essential to reducing preventable deaths and turning the tide of this crisis.

Promote Behavioral Health on Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Coalitions

Mental health and substance use often go hand-in-hand, especially among young people. A 2023 national survey found that more than 20 million Americans living with a mental health condition also struggle with a substance use disorder. Mental health professionals have the training to address trauma, identify early warning signs, and manage co-occurring conditions, all of which are crucial to successful prevention efforts. I urge ONDCP to encourage stronger mental health engagement within the Drug-Free Communities (DFC) program. This could include requiring every DFC coalition to include at least one licensed mental health provider, offering more programming focused on youth behavioral health, or developing mental health toolkits and training for coalition members. By incorporating more mental health expertise, DFC coalitions will be better equipped to tackle the root causes of substance use, such as trauma, social isolation, and untreated mental illness, and to deliver prevention strategies that are evidence-based and community-informed.

Expand Utilization of the Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program (ODMAP)

The Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program (ODMAP) is a powerful, real-time tool that helps public health and law enforcement agencies track overdose spikes as they happen. By pinpointing hotspots, agencies can respond faster, direct resources where they're most needed, and potentially save lives. As of April 2025, nearly 3 million overdose events have been logged in the system, and over 5,300 agencies across the country are actively using it.

Despite these numbers, ODMAP utilization remains inconsistent across HIDTAs and local jurisdictions, leaving serious gaps in our national overdose response network. I urge ONDCP to encourage all HIDTA-designated regions to fully adopt ODMAP and integrate it into their overdose response strategies. ONDCP should also encourage HIDTAs to promote the tool among their local partners, including emergency responders, public health departments, and community-based organizations.

To support widespread adoption, ONDCP should provide technical training, support, and funding to help agencies onboard and maintain real-time data sharing. Expanding ODMAP participation will allow for faster, more targeted interventions and ultimately help prevent more overdose deaths in communities across the country.

The opioid crisis remains one of the most pressing public health and public safety challenges of our time. As the crisis evolves, so must our response. Continued focus and investment in prevention, treatment, enforcement, and recovery is critical to saving lives and protecting our communities. I appreciate your consideration of these priorities as ONDCP develops its *2026 National Drug Control Strategy*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristen McDonald Rivet". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kristen McDonald Rivet
Member of Congress